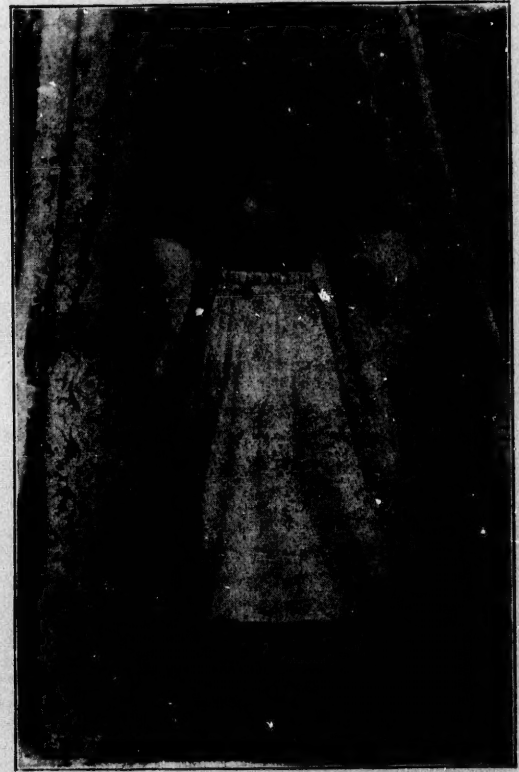


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"THE LIVING IMAGE OF HER LOST MARIANNE!"—(Page 41.)

Lot Leslie's Folks

And their queer Adventures among
the French and Indians.

A. D. 1755-1763.

BY ✓

Eleanor C. Donnelly.



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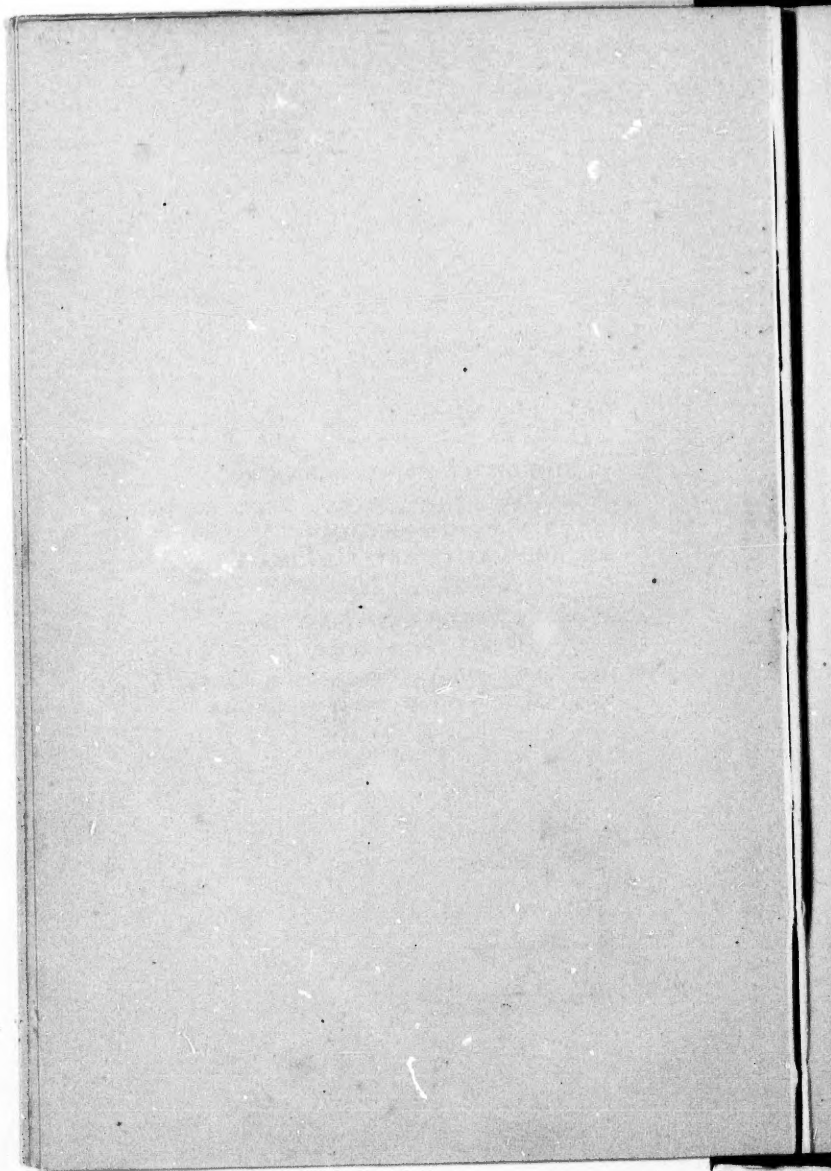
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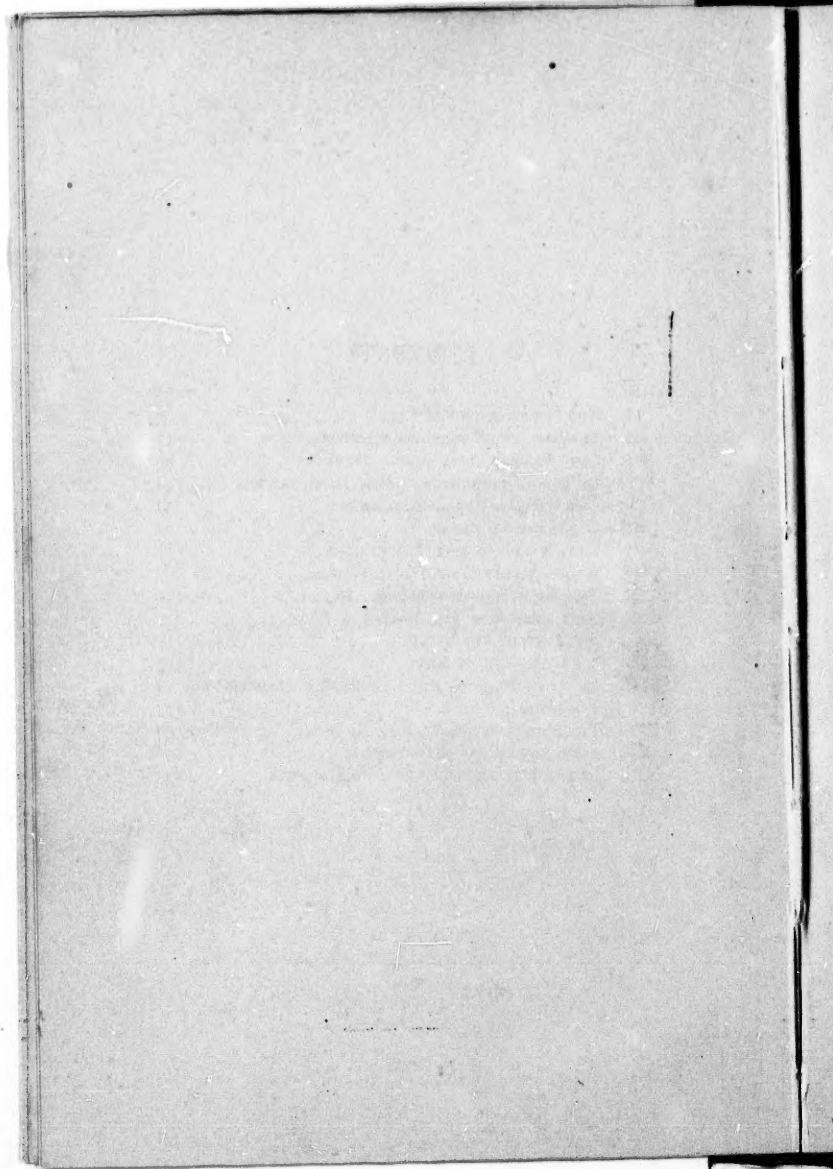
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS DEDICATED
BY ITS AUTHOR
TO HER GOOD FRIENDS
MR. AND MRS. CHARLES J. O'MALLEY,
OF LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY,
AS A TRIBUTE OF HER ESTEEM FOR
THAT GIFTED COUPLE,
WHO, (LIKE THE BROWNS), ARE IDEALLY UNITED IN THEIR LIT-
ERARY LABORS, AS IN THEIR LIFE OF WEDDED LOVE.

1871
2002



CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE SURPRISE AT THE FORT	7
II. TIMOTHY AND WILLY ARE ADOPTED	19
III. LOVE FINDS A WAY, AND—A MOTHER	30
IV. AN INDIAN PRINCESS AND HER HANDMAIDENS	44
V. THE YANKEE WOMAN'S MESSAGE	53
VI. MARIANNE ST. ANGE	61
VII. THE ATTACK ON THE BLACKHOUSE	75
VIII. WHAT HAPPENED AT THREE RIVERS	91
IX. THE MISSION OF THE ASSUMPTION	110
X. STRANGERS FROM THE FOREST	127
XI. THE FACE AT THE WINDOW	145
XII. A FATAL GAME OF BALL	163
XIII. IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH—AN UNEXPECTED MEETING	177
XIV. THE SECRET OF THE SCALES, AND WHAT CAME OF IT	190
XV. A DISCOVERY AND A DILEMMA	206
XVI. IN THE DOUBLE HOUSE AT PHILADELPHIA	223



Lot Leslie's Folks.

CHAPTER I.

THE SURPRISE AT THE FORT.

THE place where this strange old story had its beginning was Swan Island, on the coast of Maine, not far from the mouth of the Kennebec river.

There, in the year 1755, stood a good-sized fort, well-manned with English soldiers, to protect the people against the Indians.

The building was of stout wood; and around it, stretched, far and wide, a close fence of high, strong stakes or palisades, with a big gate in the middle, heavily barred and bolted.

One by one, the island-houses had been builded within this fence, and as near as might be, to the fort.

The highest to it was the cabin of old Captain James Wilson, who had fought at the taking of Cape Breton, ten years before.

One of his daughters had married a farmer from the mainland, named Lot Leslie; but, as

Grandmother Wilson was wasting away in dyspepsia, and the captain's sight beginning to fail, Lot Leslie and his folks had come to live at the homestead on Swan Island: and took care of things for the old people.

There were four Leslie children, Faith and Hope, the two elder girls, aged, the one, twelve, and the other, nine years; Wilson, the only boy, just turned eight; and little Love, the baby of three summers.

All were nice, healthy, merry children, with the bloom and freshness of the salt winds in their faces. The boy and the baby-girl resembled their good-looking mother. Wilson gave promise of being, some day, a handsome fellow; but little Love was already a real beauty, and the pet of the household.

She was very plump, and of small bones. Her eyes were large, black and soft as velvet, with long, dark, fringy lashes. Her dimpled cheeks were like roses in the milk of her snowy skin; and her head was covered with a silken mass of curls of that deep, rich red, sometimes seen in old pictures by Titian.

This union of black eyes with red hair and a dazzling complexion was the special charm of Mistress Lot Leslie. She was, also, what *Joe Gargery* has called, "a fine figger of a woman"; and it was always a marvel to the gossips of

Swan Island how so handsome a girl as Hope Wilson could have "throw'd herself away," as they termed it, "on sich a humly, no account, insignificant creetur as Lot Leslie."

But love, as everybody ought to know, is blind; and Mistress Lot dearly loved her plain little husband, finding in him many charming qualities which her neighbors failed to see.

She valued highly his dog-like devotedness to herself and children; and she prized above all, his manly courage. For, small and ugly as he was, the little man was as brave as a lion.

Although they foresaw it not, pressing need there was soon to be for all of Lot's grit and gallantry.

In the midsummer of 1755, some runners from the fort brought back word that Indians had been seen skulking around the beach, many of them painted black.

Now, in those days, when Indians painted themselves black, by means of charcoal and grease, the islanders knew it to be a sure sign of war.

So, the commander of the fort gave orders to the soldiers to look well their guns; and enjoined upon all within the enclosure, to see to it that no gate or door be left open to the prowling savages.

In spite of these strict orders, however, one

beautiful July morning, a little after daybreak, two disobedient boys, sons of a good-for-nothing fisherman, sneaked out of the garrison, to go black-berrying, and left the gate open behind them.

The watchful Indians were close at hand, lying flat upon their faces. They sprang upon the boys, like crouching panthers, and killed them so quickly with their hatchets, that the hapless little fellows had not time even to cry aloud.

In the space of ten minutes, nearly a hundred Indians had crept silently through the gate, and swarmed into the enclosure.

They were dreadful to behold—those noiseless, creeping savages, with their fluttering scalp-locks, their almost naked, dark bodies, and their brown faces, either fierce or cunning, streaked up and down with black, red, yellow, or green paint. Each carried a gun or hatchet; and long, sharp knives glittered in their belts.

Just as the sun came up, like a ball of fire, out of the sea, the Indians burst upon the fort with a hideous yell that wakened all the island-sleepers. Then, might be seen the poor commander in his night-shirt, rallying his frightened forces, and detailing the men who were to climb up to the lookout on the roof, where the fire-arrows were already beginning to fall.

The shingles had been covered, a few days be-

fore, with damp turf; but, alas! the hot July sun had baked it hard and dry, and through its cracks, the sparks found space to land.

They had scarcely smelled the smoke of the burning roof, before the noise of hatchets against the weakest door of the fort gave the garrison to know that their time was short.

A crash, a mad rush inwards of dark, shrieking demons—and the enemy was on them, face to face!

The awful end had come.

The soldiers fought like brave men; but, thus surprised and only half-awake, what could a few white men do against so many howling, blood-thirsty savages?

The fort soon became a scene of horror.

The dead and the dying lay about on all sides; but, without stopping to scalp their victims, the Indians hurried to old Wilson's cabin, to settle a long-standing grudge against the captain.

The old man and his wife, coming out to meet them with bribes, pleaded in vain for mercy.

"Thus do we settle our score!" cried the Indians, in their own tongue, striking at them with knives dripping with blood; and the old couple, gashed and bleeding, their grey hair dabbled in gore, were left, stretched lifeless, across their own doorsill.

The savages leaped over their bodies, and

rushed indoors, shouting and gibbering like maniacs.

At the head of the narrow staircase, Lot Leslie met the Indians with his rifle, and fired upon them.

He knew that Mistress Leslie and her four children, with Prudence Skillet, the hired woman, were all crying, and clinging to each other over in the little front bedroom.

His young man-of-all-work, Timothy Grindstone, armed with an axe, stood bravely at Leslie's side, and, with him, tried to make fight against the redskins. But they prevailed nothing.

Strange to say, the savages did not try to kill the two men who were wholly in their power; but, dragging out the women and children from the bedroom, they bound fast the party of seven, and hurried them down to the beach.

There, they left them, under guard of an Indian or two. Then, tearing back to the fort, they first ransacked the premises, and all the near-by houses, destroying their furniture: scalped the wounded, mutilated the dead, and ended by carrying off all the money and valuables they could lay hands on.

Lastly, they set fire to Captain Wilson's cabin; and, in the red light of the blazing buildings, went dancing and shrieking, like so many demons, back to their captives on the beach.

Alas! with what fear and fright did those poor souls behold the blood-stained wretches rushing down upon them!

They fully expected to be killed and scalped upon the spot; and, although they had never in their lives been members of any church—all, (except, perhaps, the baby), prayed fervently to God for help.

Little did they dream, in that hour of darkest trial, how wonderfully, how blessedly, their good Father in heaven would, one day, answer their prayer! If they could have foreseen it, they might have cried out, then and there, in the words of our Lord to Zaccheus: "This day is salvation come to this house!"

Blinded now, however, to all the heavenly blessings of the future, poor Mistress Leslie sat upon a rock on the sands—her arms bound with cords, and the big tears running down her comely face.

She still seemed to see her murdered father and mother, covered with wounds and blood, lying stark and cold, across the doorsill of the dear old home. She had been forced to step upon her mother's breast, as the savages dragged her over the threshold.

She felt now as if her heart would burst, when her baby, her little Love, crept to her feet, and laid her pretty head upon her lap. She could

not even clasp the darling to her bosom, because of her pinioned arms.

Little Wilson pressed close to his father's side; while Faith and Hope, white as death, and half-fainting from fright, huddled against Prudence and Timothy.

Lot Leslie made use of a few moments of quiet, before the main body of Indians returned from the burning fort, to speak some words of warning to his wife and family.

He had lived for many years near the Indian settlements, and he knew a good deal about the ways and dispositions of the savages.

"No matter what you see," he now said to the dear, helpless ones around him; "no matter what the Indians may do to you to-day, or at any other time, *keep very still—bear it all in silence!* Cry out, or make a fuss, and the redskins'll either kill you at once, or put you to a slow torture."

"O my baby! my little Love!" whispered Mistress Leslie with a great sob: "who can keep *you* from crying out? little, tender thing that you are!"

"The Lord's hand is over the innocent, ma'am," said Prudence Skillet, whose early bringing-up had been among the Puritans, and who was fond of quoting Scripture. "Remember, David said in the Psalms: 'He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them away captive.'"

"Prudence, old girl," growled the man Timothy: "you'll not find any pity among these red-skinned imps of Satan. You may make up your mind to *that*. Hark to them! Here they come, (the Lord be merciful to us!) howling and leaping like furies out of the hot place!"

It was a horrid sight, indeed, on a blessed summer morning, when the sea was like a quiet lake, and all in nature was so beautiful, peaceful and sunny—that great throng of hideous savages dancing along the sands, shrieking, and waving over their heads their bloody hatchets.

They ran straight to the poor prisoners, and shook their knives and tomahawks in their faces; but, seeing that they all sat or stood, white and still as statues of stone, (even little Love hiding her eyes on her mother's knee, without a sound) they did them, at that time, no further harm.

The chief of the band, Haukimah, gave some orders to one or two of the savages. These hurried at once to a little cove on the east coast of the island.

They were lost to sight for a few moments; and when next they were seen, it was in one of their Indian canoes, now being rowed along the shore from the spot where, all the past night, they had been in hiding.

There were eight or ten of these boats, great and small. They were rowed by the Indian

squaws in sacks of coarse, gaudy calico—their bare arms, strong and brown, seeming well used to the oars.

Again, Haukimah gave his orders.

Timothy Grindstone and little Wilson Leslie were seized by four of the Indians, and dragged into one of the smaller canoes, which immediately put off from the shore.

Next, the maid Prudence, with the little girls, Faith and Hope, were stowed among a crowd of savages in a big canoe; and, after the other boats had all been filled up with Indians, some of them guarding Lot and his wife in the chief's canoe—an old squaw was ordered out from the last boat. Haukimah beckoned her to him with his hatchet, calling her *N'-o-kum*, or Grandmother.

She was ugly and dark. Her face was a network of wrinkles, and the loose flesh hung in a double dewlap under her chin. Her cotton sack and petticoat were very dirty; but her expression was mild and peaceful.

"*A'-wash-ish!*" grunted the chief; and Lot Leslie had just remembered that the word was Indian for "baby"—when Haukimah caught up little Love from the sands (where she had been left to creep about alone), and tossed her into *N'-o-kum's* withered arms.

Another word was spoken by the chief to the old crone. It was "*Attawom;*" but it was

many a long and weary day before the captives of Swan Island came to understand what "*Attawom*" meant in English.

Little Love was a fearless, sociable child. Added to which, she was now heavy with sleep, having been roused so early from her crib, that dreadful day. So, when N'-o-kum clasped her closely in her arms, and leaped with her into the last canoe that quitted the island, she cuddled down in the old woman's embrace, and slept quietly against her dirty bosom.

Mistress Leslie, with her husband, in the foremost boat, was being carried rapidly away from all they loved on earth.

The lurid glow of their blazing home was reddening the sky; and, looking back, poor Mrs. Lot saw, with anguish, her precious baby in the arms of that filthy savage.

How bright, how dear to her, was the little head that slept upon that ugly pillow!

A line from the Bible, (which she had not read for years), came back to her mind.

It was about some other Mother, some great Woman of Israel, but she could not remember whom.

"—*And thine own soul a sword shall pierce*"—it had read.

She gave a faint cry of agony; and instantly, an Indian struck her sharply across the mouth.

Leaning against her unhappy husband's shoulder, the poor mother fainted in silence. A swoon so like death, that Lot shuddered as he felt her cold, clammy cheek against his own.

The sword of mortal anguish had pierced her soul.

and's shoul-
e. A swoon
he felt her
pierced her

CHAPTER II.

TIMOTHY AND WILLY ARE ADOPTED.

By sea and by land, through thick woods and over rough mountains, Timothy Grindstone and little Wilson Leslie were hurried by their Indian masters, down to the English settlements in Pennsylvania.

It was just after General Braddock's bloody defeat at Fort du Quesne. The savages, mad with victory, were rushing from one farm to another, robbing and murdering the settlers with the fury of fiends.

Many of these, whom Timothy and Wilson met upon the road, were dressed in the uniforms of the British officers, slaughtered by them and stripped upon the field. Scarlet coats and breeches, laced hats, sashes, and half-moons, (such as the British then wore) made these red rascals look to be such scarecrows—the military dress becoming them far less than their native blankets and plumes—that Grindstone and the boy were often moved to laugh, sad and fearful enough, though they were, at heart.

The news of Braddock's defeat, communicated by these grotesque stragglers, must have changed

the plans of the Swan Island savages; for, instead of pushing straight on to Philadelphia, they soon turned upon their tracks and, with their captives, made for the north again.

Launching their canoe upon the Alleghany river, they rowed Timothy and Wilson up to an Indian town on the south bank of the stream, some forty miles above Fort du Quesne.

When they landed at this point, the captives were astonished to see great numbers of strange Indians running toward them, whooping, and wildly waving their arms.

These were stripped naked, except for a cloth about their loins, and were painted in a horrid fashion in staring colors of brightest red, blue, yellow, and brown.

They came on in irregular swarms, like great, gaudy butterflies, until they drew closer to Grindstone and the boy. Then, they formed themselves into two long lines, facing each other, about a couple of yards apart.

While Timothy was regarding this movement with some concern, an Indian who spoke a little English, told him that he and the boy were expected to run between these ranks to the village beyond.

He further said that the strange Indians would flog them all the way; and that the quicker they ran, the better, as they would cease to strike

them whenever they reached the other end of the line.

Now, Grindstone was a well-built man of twenty-five, or thereabouts,—wiry and muscular. He was an expert at high jumping and foot-racing; and had taught little Wilson many wonderful tricks at the same. The boy had been trained by him to clear with ease the high pickets of the fort at Swan Island, to the admiration of soldiers and officers alike, and could leap to extraordinary heights, like a young kangaroo.

"Willy!" whispered Timothy, at that critical moment: "we've got to run for our lives. Make the best of your legs, my lad, and astonish the redskins!"

And with that, a couple of savages struck them a rousing blow in the back, and away down the ranks, they flew—every sannup and squaw in the double file shrieking and cracking at them, as they ran. But, never were there seen in those parts such a pair of white runners as Timothy and little Will.

They sped between the blows of their tormenters, like creatures of the wind. Now, dodging sticks, knives, and hatchets; again, leaping directly over the outstretched arm of some screaming squaw, Timothy led the way, and little Willy bravely followed.

The boy was as plucky as the man. His

pretty head was lifted, his fine eyes shone like stars.

Once, toward the end of the dreadful race, Grindstone looking back wildly over his shoulder, (blood and sweat streaming down his cheeks), saw that his little mate was sorely beset by the women and children of the tribe.

They, whose hearts should have been gentler and more merciful than the men's, were cruel and fierce as wolves.

They had left the tracks of their fists and finger-nails upon Willy's bonny little face.

It was bruised and bleeding—and the poor child, not much more than a baby!

"Jump for it, my boy!" panted Timothy as he ran, sweating at every pore: "Give the big jump I taught you on the island. It's only a few steps further; jump for my back, and I'll carry you safe to the end!"

And behold! to the surprise and delight of the savages, the plucky little fellow, drawing back a pace or two, made a sudden dart forward, and leaping into the air, cleared the space between him and his friend, and landed safely astride of Timothy's stout shoulders.

Just as he clasped him tightly about the neck, half-crying, half-laughing with the strain, Grindstone reached the first of the wigwams that marked the outskirts of the Indian settlement.

The savages burst into a great cheer.

The race was over. The trial was past.

Timothy and the boy, breathless and exhausted as they were, had won the admiration and respect of the whole tribe. The very savages, who, just before, had joined in flogging and stoning the captives, now escorted them with every sign of good-will to the tent of their chief.

Here, they were feasted upon dried deer's meat, and on boiled hominy, freely mixed with bear's oil and sugar.

As they were very hungry, they ate heartily of the food; and, seeing that the race and the rough treatment they had suffered appeared to have left them rather weak and white, the chief forced them to drink of a cordial made of honey, rum and water, which warmed them through and through, and filled them with new life.

They were, afterward, given places of honor in the centre of the camp. For, there was an old tradition in that tribe as to the coming of a white male child, who would be wonderfully gifted in every way, and who would, one day, lead their warriors on to a universal victory over their enemies.

Willy knew nothing of this old legend; and Timothy was equally ignorant of it; but sitting there together, they were moved to give humble thanks to God for His mercy in keeping them

from death, and spoke softly to each other of the dear lost ones they might never hope to see again on earth.

Meanwhile, the Indians, unusually elated by the possession of the boy, were going about from tent to tent, eating, smoking, or painting themselves.

Some beat a kind of drum, and sang hideously. Others played a flute, made of hollow cane: or twanged the jew's harp.

Here and there, groups of the younger men, some of the dandies of the tribe, sat upon the ground, playing a gambling game, of the nature of dice.

A number of plum-stones were thrown into a small wooden bowl. One side of each stone was black, the other, white. The players shook the bowl, in turn, crying out: "*Hits hits, hits! Honesy, honesy! Rago, rago!*"—which Timothy and his little friend discovered, after while, meant that the gamblers were calling in their Indian lingo, for black or white, or the color they wished to bet upon. The game always ended by turning the bowl upside down, and counting the "blacks" and "whites," as they chanced to fall.

As the result of the game, bunches of gaudy plumes, knives, bracelets, strings of wampum, and other glittering finery, changed hands rapidly—

but not without considerable bickering and quarrelling.

In consideration of their courage and skill in the race, (and out of respect to the boy's supposed dignity), Timothy and Wilson slept that night in the tent of the chief, upon a bed of deer-skins.

The next day, just after sunrise, a number of the Indians led them out again to the centre of the camp.

They formed a circle round the captives; and two of them began to pull the hair out of the heads of Grindstone and the boy. This, they did, by smearing their fingers with ashes, which a couple of squaws held for them upon pieces of bark.

Thus, getting a firmer hold, they plucked the poor captives of their hair, as if they had been plucking a pair of turkeys of their feathers.

When both heads were quite bald, saving three scalp-locks on the crown, they dressed these up in their own savage fashion. Two of them were wrapped about with a narrow, beaded strap made by themselves for that end; the other, they plaited at full length, and stuck full of silver brooches.

After this, and while the eyes of the sufferers were still streaming with tears of pain, they bored their noses and ears, and fixed them off with earrings of silver, and nose-jewels.

Next, ordering them to strip off their clothes, the savages painted their bodies, limbs, and faces with many brilliant colors.

Timothy and Willy were still smarting and stinging (although in a brave silence), from the many wounds upon their heads and faces, when their masters put big belts of wampum around their necks, and fastened silver bands on their hands and right arms.

In this savage rig, an old chief led them out into the main street of the village, and cried aloud very quickly, several times: "*Coo-wigh! coo-wigh!*"—being the Indian for "Halloo!"

At this, all the tribe came running, and stood about the old chief, who held the captives by the hand—the one on his right, the other, on his left.

Grindstone fully expected that he and Willy were now about to be put to death in some cruel fashion. He raised his eyes to heaven, feeling very ignorant, and helpless, and unfitted to die; but saying solemnly:

"Lord have mercy on me, and forgive me all my sins, for Jesus' sake! Amen." Words, which little Willy repeated after him, in a small, soft voice.

His whisper was quite drowned by the very loud voice of the old chief, who made a speech to the crowd, handing over the captives, at its end, to three young Indians.

TIMOTHY AND WILLY ARE ADOPTED. 27

These led Timothy and the boy down the adjacent bank to the river, urging them straight on, until the water was up to Willy's chin.

Then, the savages made signs to Grindstone to duck himself and Willy in the river.

But, the white man, not understanding their monkey-shines, and believing they meant to drown him and the child, made as if he would swim for his life; at which, the Indians seized both man and boy, and soused them in the water, giving them a good washing and rubbing.

The cool water was very pleasant to their wounds, yet the poor sufferers still feared the worst.

One of their tormentors who spoke a little English managed to say, however, "No hurt you!" which gave the captives some comfort and courage; but, all the while, the savages on the bank of the river, cried out: "*Quethepeh!*" (Make haste!) and laughed long and loud at the struggles of the half-drowning creatures.

The bath being ended, Timothy and the boy were led up to the council-house, where some of the tribe dressed them out in new ruffled shirts, leggings trimmed with beads and gay ribbons, handsome moccasins and garters. Their heads and faces were again painted in bright colors, and a bunch of red and yellow feathers tied to the scalp-locks on the crown of each.

Seated on a bear-skin, with Willy at his side, Timothy was presented with a pipe, a tomahawk, and a pouch made from the hide of a pole-cat, and stuffed with tobacco, and dry sumach leaves. Willy was also given a small knife and a baby tomahawk, with flint, steel, and a piece of touch-wood.

Then, the rest of the Indians came into the council-chamber, dressed, painted and plumed in their grandest fashion.

They took their seats in the order of their rank; and, for a good while, smoked their pipes in profound silence.

At length, the oldest chief made a speech to the captives, which was explained to them, on the spot, by the Indian who spoke the best English.

The old chief said:

"My big son and my little son, you are now flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone. By the ceremony just performed, every drop of white blood has been washed out of your veins. You are taken into the Caughnewaga nation. You are adopted into our warlike tribe, in the place of a great man, my brother, who once belonged to us, and of his little son, who is also dead. After what has passed this day, you are one of us by an old strong law of ours. You have, now, nothing to fear. We are as much bound to love, sup-

port, and defend you, from this out, as if you were born children of the forest, sons of our own great family."

The cunning old chief said nothing about the ancient tradition of his tribe, which made Willy especially valuable and desirable to the Caughnewagas. It had been early agreed between him and his council, that it would be safer to suppress the facts from the captives, lest they should presume too much upon their privileges.

But the old superstition of the tribe added greatly to the warmth of their welcome, as the Indians crowded around "brother" Timothy and "nephew" Willy who, for their part, were not as much elated at the new relationship, as their hosts might have supposed.

While Timothy was turning over in his mind what had been said to them; and, truth to tell, not putting much trust in the fine words of the old chief,—a big savage, painted black, and, flourishing over his head a belt of red wampum, darted into the council-chamber, shouting in terrific tones:

"Haukimah has returned! Haukimah has returned! *Tibiscag* (this night), he comes to lead us to war against the Wyandots!"

CHAPTER III.

LOVE FINDS A WAY, AND—A MOTHER.

IN the upper chamber of a large, old-fashioned house, on the outskirts of Montreal, a young and beautiful lady sat alone.

The room was spacious, and richly furnished as a bedroom. Costly rugs lay about on the polished floor; delicate laces veiled the great windows, looking front upon the suburbs of more than two centuries ago; and opening back upon a big, splendid garden, full of midsummer bloom, and scent, and song.

On the walls, hung many an oil-painting (of the great masters) of the Madonna and her Holy Child; with, here and there, dainty pictures on ivory or copper of the angels and saints of God.

But the sad eyes of the young and beautiful lady were not fixed upon these as long or as wistfully as they were on another and smaller picture hanging over the Blessed Virgin's shrine, beside the huge, carved, mahogany bedstead, with its curtains of crimson silk.

It was the portrait of a little girl of some three or four summers. The face was lovely as that

of a cherub. Its dimpled cheeks were round and rosy as twin-flowers. Under the broad, white brow, round which clustered a crop of silken curls of deep, rich red, a pair of wonderful eyes smiled out at the gazer—large, black, and soft as velvet, with long fringy lashes.

The pretty pouting lips, like the halves of a divided cherry, seemed ready to speak the word, "Mamma!"

Hot tears rushed into the lady's eyes, as she gazed, and ran in streams down her pale cheeks.

The face on the wall was so faithful a little copy of her own, that it was easy to guess the cause of her grief, even before she covered her eyes with her white jewelled hands, and sobbed aloud:

"My only one! my lost Marianne! If I could but hear you call me 'mamma!' once again! How can I bear it? A year, to-day, since my darling baby died!"

She rose from her chair, and went to the big mahogany chest of drawers on the opposite side of the room.

She drew a key from the silver chain at her girdle. Opening with it an upper drawer, she took out of it, with many kisses and tears, some little dresses, a baby's embroidered pinafore, and a pair of tiny shoes, still bearing the wrinkles of fat little ankles, and the print of baby toes.

A shower of withered rose leaves fell out of the folds of the snowy garments; and with them, dropped upon the floor, (from a bit of silver paper,) a silky curl of Titian red.

Stooping, the lady caught it quickly up. She was pressing it tenderly to her lips, when a rap came at the chamber-door, and a waiting-maid entered. A small, dark woman, with a quiet, attentive face.

"Madame," said she, "the old Indian squaw is here again. She has journeyed far; she is very tired and hungry. Will you please come into the kitchen, and see what she has brought you?"

"In a moment, Margot," replied Madame St. Ange—for that was her name. "Give the old woman some bread and coffee; and let her rest in the lower hall until I come."

With a low curtsy, the maid departed.

Then, in the perfumed solitude of her beautiful chamber, after softly smoothing out the little garments, piece by piece, and laying them lovingly back in the drawer, the lady kissed once more the tress of baby hair, and hid it among the faded rose leaves.

This done, the key turned in the drawer, and restored to her *châtelaine*, Madame St. Ange bathed her reddened eyelids in rose-water from a crystal crust on her toilet-table, and passed down the staircase to the big sunny hall.

The old squaw had just finished her bowl of coffee at the foot of the stairs.

She stood up at the sound of the mistress' step. She was ugly, dark, and dirty; but her wrinkled face, with the double dewlap under the chin, was not a bad face. It had a motherly, friendly look.

"Well, N'o-kum," said Madame St. Ange, kindly, "what have you to sell to-day?"

"Behold, Madame!" cried Margot, with a laugh, pointing to a small object inside the adjoining kitchen, which, (standing as she did with her back to the half-closed door), Madame St. Ange had not yet discovered.

Now, pushing wide the door, and stepping forward into the kitchen, the lady saw, with surprise, a baby-girl crawling on the tiled floor, and picking some apple-peelings out of the cracks.

The child was so dirty that her skin was dark as N'o-kum's. Her clothes were in rags; and a filthy cloth was tied tightly over her head, completely covering her hair.

There was nothing eye-sweet or pleasing in her looks, but Madame's tender heart moved her to stoop and pat the forlorn little head, saying softly: "Poor little baby! poor motherless little papoose!"

"No papoose!" grunted the old squaw, "white baby, white baby. N'o-kum want *attawom*."

"N'-o-kum wants to sell you, does she, *chérie*?" said Madame, still kindly stroking the small head at her feet.

At the sight of the fair, gentle face stooping tenderly over her, the poor little baby caught at the hem of Madame's gown, and hiding her eyes in it, burst into tears, with a loud cry.

Madame's motherly heart was deeply moved.

She was a good Christian. She had always been used to look upon and love the poor, especially poor little children, as the living images of her Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

She now took the little waif into her arms; and, in spite of the dirt and rags, pressed her close to her warm bosom.

The baby clung about her neck, hugging her, again and again, and sobbing "Mamma! mamma!" till Madame's eyes overflowed with tears.

"For Mademoiselle Marianne's sake," she whispered to Margot, "I would like to buy the little creature, and keep her for my own. But what would Monsieur, my husband say?"

The maid shrugged her shoulders significantly, and made a despairing gesture—her hands extended with the palms thrown upward.

Her mistress sighed deeply. Carrying the child over to N'-o-kum, she put her reluctantly into the old squaw's arms.

"Monsieur St. Ange is absent from home," she said to the Indian woman. "I cannot take the baby from you, to-day. Maybe, the Sisters at the convent will buy her."

Then to the maid:

"Margot, give the child a cup of warm milk, and send her away with N'-o-kum."

Madame's heart was very sore as she spoke the words. It cost her a sharp pang to give up the baby to the squaw.

The poor little thing struggled fiercely in N'-o-kum's arms, and stretched out her fat hands to the beautiful white lady, screaming all the while: "Mamma! mamma! me want my mamma!"

Madame St. Ange hurried out of the kitchen, and retreated to her chamber to escape those piercing cries—those tender pleadings, that awakened in her breast so many sad and touching memories.

Her husband was a rich merchant of Montreal. He had gone on a business trip to Quebec, and was not expected back for a week or two.

He was a good man—an excellent Christian—always very kind and indulgent to his lovely, young wife.

But he had one weakness—common to his nation. He was excessively proud of his name, and of his long line of illustrious ancestors.

He could even be a little stern on these points;

so that Madame did not feel sure enough of his aristocratic benevolence to buy the strange baby from the squaw in his absence, and adopt it for her own.

True, she had plenty of money in her private purse (always kept well supplied by her husband); and, in a corner drawer of her cabinet was a dazzling array of gilt beads, gaudy feathers, silver chains, and other trinkets, for any one of which N'-o-kum would have joyfully bartered her whole tribe—to say nothing of a miserable little white child.

Madame remembered, however, that when the rich old merchant, Louis St. Ange, had done her the honor of making her his wife, she had been only a simple Irish maiden, Eileen O'Connell, the *protégée* of his favorite sister, the Superioress of the Ursuline convent who had educated her.

Beautiful as an angel, but without money, and without ancestors of any account—save for their Christian virtues—Eileen was deeply grateful for this noble gentleman's love, for the many splendid proofs of his entire devotion to her.

If now, it had been but a question of buying a spaniel or a singing-bird! But she would never grieve or annoy Louis by any wilful act—even though it were in the cause of holy charity.

As twilight began to fall, she put aside the needle work, with which she had striven to dis-

tract her thoughts from the forlorn baby, and walked to one of the windows, looking down upon the road in front of her stately house. Pushing apart the lace curtains, she saw N' o-kum, with several young Indian men, squatting on the pavement, close to the main entrance. The poor baby had crawled away from her redskinned nurse, and was creeping up the steps, beating the marble with her plump little hands, and screaming still the same pitiful cry: "Mamma! mamma! me want my mamma!"

The warm Irish heart of Eileen St. Ange ached at the sound. Had not she herself been a foundling, dropped by night into the basket at the convent door by her decent young mother, whom the nuns found, next morning, dying upon their steps?

Who was better able, than she, to feel for the sorrows of the homeless and the motherless?

Long after the doors of the big house were barred and bolted for the night—the maids in their beds, and silence and darkness filling all the spacious rooms, the young mistress of all their splendors, wide awake upon her couch, heard through the open windows—for it was a warm August night—the wailing cry of the hapless baby at her door.

The whole night long, the shrill voice of the child was never quiet. It would have been very

easy for N'-o-kum and her band to whip or frighten the baby into silence ; but the savages had a purpose of their own in letting it cry, unchecked.

The old squaw was keen-eyed, and shrewd enough.

She had seen the tears, that day, on the white lady's lovely cheeks. She had noticed how tenderly the young mistress had pressed the baby to her bosom.

Was it not, out of that handsome house, that a small white coffin, covered with flowers, passed, a year before ?

Haukimah, the chief, had said to N'-o-kum at parting: "*Attawom abishasheu netansis*—sell the little girl! Barter her to the French for what she will bring."

And now, N'-o-kum was letting the baby cry, and cry, and cry—always—"Mamma! mamma!"—until Madame, the pale face, would be able to stand it no longer, but would open her door at the daybreak, and come down the steps, saying:

"Here, N'-o-kum, here is your price! Take it, and go your way; but leave *me* the child!"

So, indeed, it fell out, in time; only, instead of Madame, the mistress, Margot the maid came down the steps at sunrise, and, for a handful of silver and a string of gilt beads, was given the poor, hungry, crying baby, which she carried away with her, upstairs to her lady's room.

N'-o-kum and her gang departed at once, grinning and capering with delight.

Madame St. Ange in a white linen dressing-gown, looking almost as white as the linen from her sleepless night of heart-ache and conflicting fears, stretched out her arms eagerly for the child.

But Margot (who had her doubts about the whole business) held fast to the baby, growling :

"Not yet, my lady, not yet! The wretched little creature is filthy. She is covered with vermin, and too dirty for Madame to handle. Let me first take her into the closet, and give her, if you please, a warm bath in Mam'selle Marianne's tub."

A great sob shook the young mother from head to foot.

"Yes, Margot," she whispered : "a warm bath, first, in Mam'selle Marianne's tub. I never thought I could bring myself to see her pretty clothes upon another; but here,"—running to the chest of drawers, and taking out an armful of her dead child's belongings—"when the poor baby is clean, put on her, good Margot, these things of my little lost one!"

The maid disappeared with her charge; and Madame St. Ange kneeling upon her prayer-stool, and gazing, by turns, at the parian statue of the Blessed Virgin in its niche and at the

portrait of the lovely child that hung above it, said her morning prayers with many tears, and offered up to God, out of a full heart, the little stranger within her gates.

She had some serious misgivings and anxieties to lay before the Divine Consoler. It was the first time in her married life that she had acted in a matter of any moment without her husband's knowledge and consent.

To be sure, there was question, here, of the salvation of a precious soul; but would the faith of the exclusive old merchant victoriously stand this crucial test? Eileen hid her face as she prayed. It seemed to her excited fancy as if the air were filled with the aristocratic phantoms of the dead St. Anges, who glared sternly at her, reproaching her with their cold eyes for this deed of mercy done to an outcast child beneath their honored descendant's roof.

Presently, an outcry in the closet startled her from her doubts and her devotions.

The voice of Margot rose in a shrill shriek—half-laughing, half-crying: "A miracle, my lady, a miracle! *Mon Dieu!* Come, quick, and see the miracle!"

The closet door was flung open at the word, and the usually quiet maid bounced into the room, strangely flushed and flurried, pushing before her, through the lace *portières*, with that

same queer laugh, broken by hysterical sobs—
what? Was it a vision from the innocent dead?
Was it an angel visitant from Paradise?

Before the bewildered lady, stood a lovely
child—the *living image of her lost Marianne!*

There, was the same round, rosy, cherub-like
face—there, the same mass of silken, dark-red
ringlets—the same great, black, velvety eyes
with their long, curling lashes!

"Mamma! mamma!" cried the pouting,
cherry lips; and, opening her arms, Madame
St. Ange gathered into them the warm, white,
precious burden, and pressed it so closely to her
heaving breast, that the baby was frightened at
the strong throbbings of the mother's happy
heart, and uttered a new cry: "Papa!"

"Eileen, my wife!" said a deep voice at the
door behind her: "What is the meaning of
this? Am I dreaming, or do I see——?"

"Our lost Marianne! our angel, come back to
us from heaven! Forgive me, Louis! I could not
help but take her in?"

And, flying to her husband's embrace, Eileen
St. Ange cast her beautiful burden upon his broad
breast, and laid down her own bright head be-
side it, with a heavenly joy and content seldom
tasted on earth.

If the merchant's dark brows contracted, if his
cheek paled, and his stern lips were drawn with

a sting of secret anguish, Madame and her baby-guest saw it not.

Only Margot witnessed the change in her master's face; but the trusty maid kept her own counsel, and at once quitted the room.

She went downstairs to the drawing-room, and began to dust the frames of the great windows, looking to the front.

All was quiet in the sunny road. Nothing was in sight, save a black bundle lying in the roadside.

Had she gone earlier to her task, she would have beheld another singular scene. As old N'o-kum and her followers were 'rudging away from the merchant's door, a pale, wild-eyed woman who had been scrubbing the steps of a bakeshop opposite, rushed across the street, and, catching at the squaw's blanket, sobbed more than said:

"What have you done with my baby? Where have you left my child—my little Love?"

It was the child's own mother—it was Mistress Lot Leslie!

With her husband, she had been sold by the Indians to the baker, Jean Martin, whose shop could be seen from the windows of the St. Ange mansion.

Truth, certainly, is sometimes stranger than fiction.

LOVE FINDS A WAY, AND—A MOTHER. 43

The Indian woman shrugged her shoulders, and shook off the hand upon her blanket.

"Baby all right!" she grunted: "Baby, good wigwam! Baby, *netansis kissi saw enogan nigah*, (daughter of a beautiful mother). *Quithipeh!* (make heart!)"

And all the other Indians marched past the weeping mother, wagging their heads, and crying in mockery: "*Quithipeh! quithipeh!*"

With a deep groan of anguish, as if her overtaxed heart had broken, poor, pretty Mistress Leslie threw up her arms above her head, and, for the second time in her hardy life, dropped in a dead faint among the savages.

CHAPTER IV.

AN INDIAN PRINCESS AND HER HANDMAIDENS.

THE name of the Princess was Suitara, and she was the pet daughter of Pontiac, mighty chief of the Ottawas of Michigan.

She was not much of a princess to look at—yet her father was as truly king of his tribe as the royal George, who then sat upon England's throne, was the ruler of his people.

The girl was about sixteen years old. She was short and fat—so fat, that her small, cunning eyes seemed half-buried in the cushions of her broad, brown cheeks. Her forehead was very low, and her nose and red lips very thick; but the wide mouth showed a splendid set of white, even teeth every time she spoke or smiled. Her coarse, black hair was plaited in two long, heavy braids, that fell below her waist, tied with knots of many-colored ribbons; and on top of her head was set a sort of crown of wampum, made of shell-beads, yellow, purple, white, red, and black, which glittered like jewels in the sun.

She wore a sack and skirt of scarlet cloth, richly embroidered in tinsel. From her elbows

to her hands, her arms were covered with bracelets. There were many necklaces around her fat throat; and several sorts of jewelled rings in her ears.

Her feet were small: her moccasins, marvels of sparkling bead-work. These, as well as her dress, were the work of her own hands; for Suitara had spent a year or two at the school of the Ursuline nuns in Quebec, and had, there, learned to sew and embroider beautifully.

She had been taught, as well, to speak some French; and had picked up a good deal of English among the young Yankee pupils—most of them, little New England girls who had been captured by the Indians.

The nuns had tried hard to make a good Catholic of the Princess. Once, indeed, she had even gone so far as to obtain her father's permission to be baptized; but, being of a lazy, selfish nature—a genuine child of the forest—she had drawn back at the last moment, remaining unconverted from her sensualities and superstitions to the end of her school-days. She loved the gentle nuns, however, very dearly in her savage fashion, even if she delighted in their lessons in fancy-work, more than she did in their instructions in the Catechism.

She sat, now, upon the flat top of a high rock (overlooking the eastern bank of the Detroit

river), stringing beads for a necklace, on a design given her by the Ursuline Superioressa.

Some half-dozen young girls sat or squatted around her, helping her with her task, or busy with like work on their own account.

Two of these handmaidens were white. The one on her right, who held toward her a big clam-shell filled with many-colored beads, is one of our young friends of Swan Island—Faith Leslie, a plain, substantial, rather ordinary girl of twelve. Her tints were all neutral—grey eyes, dust-colored hair, and a dull complexion.

Her little sister, Hope, three years younger, sat on Suitara's left, sorting out some tangled skeins of sewing silk.

The rough life among the Indians had not served Hope Leslie as well as it had served her more robust sister.

Both had now, for three months, been the slaves of the Indian Princess. They might, indeed have been sold to a more cruel and brutal mistress; but Suitara had a good deal of the savage in her, for all. She was not only selfish and lazy (as we had said) but wilful and changeable as the wind, and childishly pettish and jealous.

Little Hope, who was a sensitive, nervous child, had suffered sadly in the rude life of an Indian lodge.

She had grown tall for her age; she stooped at the shoulders, had weak eyes, and was very thin and pale. A constant longing for her mother and her old home seemed to burn, like a live coal, in her little heart, wearing out her strength.

Homesickness, fear of her surroundings, and the lack of the bracing salt-breezes of Swan Island, were plainly killing her by inches.

The other girls of the group were Indians—none of them worthy of special notice, except the one who sat opposite Suitara, on a large boulder, and who was known as Catharine of the Wyandots.

She was a small, brown maiden of strangely beautiful face and form. Dressed in a simple garb of coarse blue flannel, she wore no ornaments, save a brass rosary-chain around her neck, from which, hung on her bosom, a large crucifix of the same metal.

There was a lovely look of meekness and purity on the peaceful face of this girl. Her soft, dark eyes, like those of a frightened fawn, were, most of the time, veiled timidly by their long, silken lashes.

Altogether, she bore a striking likeness to the picture of the Holy Virgin of Guadalupe, imprinted, by a miracle, some two centuries before, on the leathern apron of a poor Mexican Indian.

Catharine of the Wyandots (or Hurons, as

they are better known), had been the schoolmate of Suitara at the convent of the Ursulines; but, unlike the Princess, she was a pupil of their academy for many years, and became there a fervent, practical Catholic.

Returning, at last, to her tribe, she had carried to them the good tidings of salvation; and had proved, from that time on, the guardian angel of her people. At the request of her father, the chief sachem, a priest had been sent by the famous apostle, Father Charlevoix, to found a mission near Fort Detroit, a mile or so above the Wyandot settlement.

The tribe had been Christians, a hundred years before; but had lost the faith through an incursion of the fierce Iroquois, who had conquered them in their settlement elsewhere.

Suitara was very fond of Catharine. She called her "*Ne miss*" or "my elder sister," (as she was a little younger than the Wyandot girl); and very patient and winning was Catharine with the wilful, unbaptized one, who had never known the sweetness and strength of the holy Sacraments—hoping to induce her, before long, to become a practical Catholic.

The Princess had now been stringing her beads for the tiresome space of fifteen minutes. This was an age to the fickle creature, who was usually restless as a wild bird.

She had been chattering away to her girls, while she wrought, and most of her talk was about the strange marvel that had appeared, the night before, in the heavens.

The wise ones of the tribe had beheld on the face of the full moon, the images of an Indian hatchet and a bleeding scalp; and drops of rain as red as blood, and smelling strongly of sulphur had fallen in the early morning.¹

Catharine began to speak some mild words against putting faith in these and other queer signs, dear to the superstitious Princess. She urged that, doubtless, they had their cause in some unknown law of nature.

"Hold your tongue, *Ne miss!*" pouted Suitara; "you are as wise as a medicine-man, but you don't know everything. There are ghosts in the forests, and magic signs in the moon and stars, that are far beyond *your* little knowledge.—There! take that, and finish it!"—and she flung at Catharine the half-woven necklace she had been fingering. "I am going to sing you all a new *Récit*—the *Song of Suitara!*"

With a quick turn of her fat hand, she drew over her shoulder, a sort of rude guitar that hung at her back, and began to tune the strings.

¹ Both these freaks of nature actually occurred at this point about the middle of the eighteenth century.

Music was one of her passions, and she showed marked talent for it.

"The *Song of Suitara*," said she, grinning around at the girls, while her stumpy fingers strayed over the strings in a wild, sweet prelude, "is not about myself, but about the one I was named after. She was the sister,—the *Ne miss* of my great-grandmother. One of the old squaws taught it to me, last night, while we sat at the lodge-door, watching the bloody scalp cross the silver of the moon."

With that, the Princess struck the strings bravely; and began to chant in the Ottawa tongue (to a queer, melancholy tune) words, which would be something like these in English:

Sing of the bright Suitara !
Sing of the Indian maid !
The young, the broken-hearted,
Who, in her bloom, departed
Into the Land of Shade !

Hair, like a floating shadow :
Eyes, as the starbeams bright ;
And form like waving willow,
Or foam-wreath on the billow,
Were hers—her sire's delight !

He strove to train his darling
To every forest-art.
What wonder that her graces,
Her sweetest of all faces
Won the bravest heart ?

AN INDIAN PRINCESS.

51

Not of a dusky warrior,
Chief of a swarthy band;
But, heart of a noble ranger,
A fair-hair'd, pale-faced stranger,
Son of the Saxon land!

* * * * *

'Twas in the Moon of Flowers,
In Nature's dreamy mood,
When star-rays softly quiver
Upon the running river,
Suitara first was wooed.

"O love, sweet love!" he murmured:
"Thy soft eyes turn on me!
As swiftly flows the river,
The happy, shining river,
To mingle with the sea —

"So flows my eager spirit,
This longing soul of mine,
The light and gloom unheeding,
Runs swiftly (gladly speeding)
To mingle, love, with thine!"

And, warbled back Suitara,
Warm-blushing in her charms:
"As sings the deep sea ever
Whene'er the shining river
Comes leaping to its arms;

"E'en so, my fair-hair'd chieftain,
My river strong and free!
My soul's deep sea rejoices,
And all its myriad voices
Are singing glad to thee!"

LOT LESLIE'S FOLKS.

Thus, was the tender wooing
By silver streams begun ;
And ere the Moon of Flowers
Had spent its blushing hours,
Sultara's heart was won.

Was won,—but not unheeded
By all that dusky tribe,
Who, at the council-fire,
Had roused her gloomy sire,
With bitter jest and gibe.

Fierce eyes had watched the wooing
Amid the forest-shade ;
Dark forms had followed, noiseless,
With burning rage (yet voiceless),
The pale-face and the maid,

The while, the lovers wandered
With smiling lip and eye—
Beneath the summer heaven,
A deadly oath was given :
The fair-hair'd chief must die !

CHAPTER V.

THE YANKEE WOMAN'S MESSAGE.

At this point, the Princess broke off her song—showing signs of strange and strong excitement.

She pouted out her thick, red lips, and lowered her heavy brows, until her small eyes glowed under them like tiny sparks of red fire.

She seemed to fairly pant and choke in a burst of passionate wrath. Throwing the guitar on the ground, she sprang up, and began to pace to and fro, wringing her hands, and crying out in a loud, mournful voice: "Oh! *have, have, have!*" (or alas! alas! alas!) with a long, dreary accent on each syllable—as one who laments the dead.

Her Indian maids looked slyly at each other, askance, as if to say: "We know what she is crying about, don't we?"

Whether or not she caught one of these side-long glances, in transit, it is hard to say; but, certain it is, that the daughter of Pontiac suddenly stopped her mortuary parade upon the rocks, caught up her guitar, and slung it around her neck, and, after spitting fiercely at the now frightened maids, burst forth afresh into:

LOT LESLIE'S FOLKS.

Oh! sweetly sleeps Suitara!
 The night wind scarcely stirs;
 And, in her magic dreaming,
 Her lover's eyes are beaming—
 His hand is clasp'd in hers.

Oh! sweetly sleeps Suitara!
 But in the forest gloom,
 No pitying moon is gleaming,
 When, awful oaths redeeming,
 Her lover meets his doom!

Ah! ghastly, cold—he lieth
 Upon a mossy bed,
 With faintest starlight peeping
 Upon his dreamless sleeping,
 The desolate, the dead!

The sullen chieftains gather;
 —From out the silent grove,
 They bear him, nushed forever,
 Unto the shining river,
 Where 't he met his love.

* * * * *
 Alas! for sweet Suitara!
 The sunlight—half-afraid—
 Its golden finger presses
 Upon her silken tresses,
 And wakes the sleeping maid.

She rises up in gladness,
 While, like a treach'rous tide,
 Her happy dreams ensnare her;
 Her footsteps swiftly bear her
 Down to the river's side.

Alas! alack! Suitors!
That bloody corse and stark:
How mocking is the shiver
Of sunlight on the river
When all within is dark!

O brow, where is thy glory?
O Love, thy winning art?
Despair and Death are breathing
Their fun'ral strains—are wreathing
Their night shades round the heart!

Woe, woe to that sad maiden!
She kneeled her on the sod;
In anguish wild and lonely,
She called for mercy only,
On *Manitou*, her God.

And, bending o'er her lover,
Whose face the long hair hid,
(His blood-drench'd locks up-turning,)
She rained her tear-drops burning
On cheek, and brow, and lid.

Then, sang she, there, in sorrow,
A mad and mournful strain,
A dirge of happier hours,
Of paling, fading flowers,
That ne'er might bloom again:

"Farewell, thou rushing river!
O earth, farewell, forever!
The Spirit Land hath charms.
For there, my pale love lingers,
And waves his shining fingers,
And wooes me to his arms!

"I come, O fair-hair'd chieftain!
 My spirit love!" she sang:
 "I come, my own true hearted!"
 — Ere lip and sound had parted,
 Suitara downward sprang!

* * * * *

Alas! for mad Suitara!
 The waters cool and bright,
 With rippling, fond caresses,
 Closed o'er her streaming tresses,
 Closed o'er her eyes of light!

Another Moon of Flowers
 Came smiling, blushing still,
 And beauteous was the quiver
 Of sunlight on the river,
 Or starlight on the rill.

But, in an English homestead
 A mother wept her dead;
 And an Indian lodge was mourning
 A face no more returning,
 A form forever fled!

With a noisy flourish on her guitar, the Princess ended her lengthy recital.

"Mademoiselle," asked Faith Leslie with a look of horror in her honest eyes, (Suitara always made her slaves call her "*Mademoiselle*"—she liked the courtly sound of it): "Do you really mean it?"

"Mean what?" sniffed her Highness, barely turning her head to the right.

"That this—this Indian lady, dashed herself

from the rock, and drown'd herself, because her beau was killed?"

"That's just what the song means," replied Suitara, picking softly at the strings; "and just what I would do myself, if anybody killed *my* lover, be he red or white!"

"Oh! no, no, dear," said Catharine with gentle firmness: "you would *never* do that! It would be a dreadful crime. To kill one's self in cold blood is to rush straight into the everlasting flames of hell! Oh! no, Mademoiselle, you would *never* do that!"

She spoke in French, and with a strange, solemn earnestness.

"*Ne miss!*" cried the Princess sternly: "you insult the memory of my namesake, of the sister of my great-grandmother. Have you the impudence to tell me, before my maids, that my ancestor, the illustrious Suitara, is now burning in the eternal fires of hell? I am ashamed of you, *Ne miss! Ne kis si wash on, Ne miss*, (I am angry, elder sister!)"

"Hey, diddle, diddle!
The cat's in the fiddle;
The dish hopped over the spoon.
The little dog laughed
To see the sport,
And the cow jumped over the moon!"

said a loud voice so close at hand, that it made

the maidens start, and the Princess spring to her feet.

The speaker was a white woman, who had come along the river-road from a Wyandot hut, while Suitara was singing. All the maids were so busy with the song, or with their work, that no one had noticed her approach.

She was a tall, homely woman, loose-jointed, and past her first youth. She had a queer, overgrown look in her shabby brown kersey coat and skirt of yellow cotton, which plainly showed her bony ankles, and her large feet in a pair of old, broken shoes.

In these days, she might have been mistaken for a fourth-rate bicyclist, about to mount her wheel.

But Faith and Hope Leslie had no sooner laid eyes on her plain, honest face, than they ran to her with open arms, crying:

"Why, it's Prudence! It's our own dear old Prudence Skillet!"

"Lord love you, children!" said the newcomer cordially, as she caught to her flat breast the young things she had nursed in babyhood: "I'm heart-glad to see you again! Didn't you tell 'em about me, Catharine of the Wyandots?" (turning to the Indian girl): "Didn't she think it worth while to remark, my pretties, that Prudence Skillet of Swan Island had been sold by

them peaky redskins to her mother, Mistress Tarbucket, for—think of it!—a handful of ribbons and beads?"

"*Tarbuki*, good Prudence," corrected Catharine mildly; and even the other Indian girls laughed.

"Botheration on their heathenish names!" cried the Yankee woman, straightening her cap, which Hope had knocked sideways in her loving caresses: "Isn't one of the old squaws named *White-wash-brush*!"

"*Why-washi-brooch*!" put in the Princess in a pet: "*Ciel!* she is Catharine's grandmother! *No miss!*" said she to the Wyandot girl in their own tongue: "what has brought this saucy slave of yours here, to make sport of our people?"

"Never you trouble yourself about it, my gal," replied Prudence with a glance of loving respect at her young Indian mistress: "If this fat little she-bear must know it, your good mother sent me here with a message. An Injin runner has just rushed into the blockhouse, yander. He says lots of strange canoes full of redskins is coming up the river. The best thing you gals can do is to pick up your traps, and hurry back with me to the village!"

Before the last words were out of the speaker's mouth, Suitara had crept to the edge of the cliff, thrown herself flat on her stomach, and leaning forward, peered anxiously up the stream.

There, sure enough, were the crowded boats rowing swiftly down the river!

They were far enough off to make it impossible to see if they carried friends or foes; yet near enough to strike terror to the hearts of the maidens on the rock.

Springing again to her feet, the Princess caught Catharine by one hand, Faith Leslie by the other; and, followed by the other girls, ran, like a deer, toward the Wyandot village, her guitar rattling at her back, and her long, black braids standing out behind her on the wind, as if they had been wired.

Little Hope clung, pale and trembling, to Prudence Skillet's arm.

But the Yankee woman held bravely up her precious burden; and, as she strode along behind the maidens, she kept muttering texts to cheer her young charge's heart. And, in spite of the threatening peril, the little white girls felt somewhat at home once more, as they heard the old familiar voice of their servitor murmuring:

"The Lord hath chastened me sore, yet He hath not given me over to death. . . . Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thy heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord!"

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CHAPTER VI.

MARIANNE ST. ANGE.

LET us now go back to that early morning in August, when poor Mistress Leslie dropped down in a faint, close to the door of the St. Ange mansion in Montreal.

Old N'o-kum and her Indians had long since disappeared. The suburban street was still very quiet, no one being abroad at that hour, save tradesmen, or a few pious souls hurrying along to early Mass.

None of these passed close to the spot where the poor woman lay, all in a heap, upon the pavement.

At last, Lot Leslie came out of the baker's shop, and was about to fill with loaves of fresh bread, the little cart, which he, daily, trundled about the city, serving his master's customers.

His eye fell upon the idle scrubbing bucket and mop; and then wandered to the dark object lying on the other side of the street.

He had missed his wife from their room over the stable; but supposed she was busy with her

mistress in the kitchen, or occupied, as was her wont, before breakfast, in cleaning the front steps.

Now, running across the street, he saw, with horror, that the senseless bundle on the side-walk was really his poor companion in misery.

Her head had been cut by her fall, and her face was covered with blood from the wound.

Lot's piercing cries soon brought out the frightened baker, Jean Martin, from his shop; and between them, the men raised the unconscious woman, and carried her back to her room in the stable.

Before noon, the poor creature was raving in a high fever.

Her many sorrows and losses, coupled with the morning's shock, and the injury to her head in that cruel fall upon the street, had brought on an attack of brain-fever.

For many weeks, poor Hope Leslie hovered between life and death.

Her mistress, an excellent Catholic French-woman, nursed her with great charity and devotion; and the baker kindly allowed Lot many a free moment to watch beside her bed.

Neither of them knew that, on the day, when the poor woman was at her worst, a splendid carriage rolled up to the door of Louis St. Ange's house, and stopped there—the glossy white

horses, in their gold-mounted harness, stamping the ground and tossing their haughty heads, as if eager to be off again.

Presently, the house-door opened, and Monsieur and Madame St. Ange came out, richly dressed, followed by Margot, carrying in her arms the adopted child.

Little Love was beautiful as a picture in the exquisite white robe, cloak and cap of the dead Marianne. Her cheeks were like fresh roses after the morning bath, and her big, black eyes sparkled with joy, as well as with the love for her new parents.

When the party were seated in the carriage, the liveried coachman and footmen sprang to their places, and away pranced the horses to the parish church of Notre Dame.

Here, little Love was carried up to the altar of the Blessed Virgin, where the priest in waiting baptized her for the first time in her little life, giving her the name of Marianne St. Ange. Her new parents knew her by no other, as the baby was too young to speak plainly the words "Love Lealie"; and old thieving N'o-kum either did not know, or did not care to reveal the name of her infant captive.

Strange to say, the priest who baptized little Love had no sooner finished the ceremony, than he was called away to the bake-house of Jean

Martin, to attend there a sick servant, believed to be dying of brain-fever.

The beautiful charity of the baker's wife had deeply touched the heart of poor Mistress Leslie, and opened for her the door to the Light of God, the true Faith of Christ. When reason began to return to her poor racked brain, feeling, (from her deadly weakness) that death might be very near, and realizing that she knew little or nothing of God or the things of God, she listened willingly to the kind words and simple instructions of Madame Martin, and at last consented to see the priest.

Lot Leslie was not altogether satisfied with this arrangement; but he was very fond of his wife, and very grateful to the Martins for all their kindness to her.

Therefore, he made no objections when the sick woman expressed a desire to be baptized. As he could not bring himself, however, to go into the room while the priest was there, he took his pipe and his cap, and went out for a stroll in the streets, until "all the fuss" (as he called it) should be over.

In this way, he came to pass by a magnificent carriage and horses, with liveried outriders, that dashed around the corner as he turned it, and stopped in front of a big house near by.

Lot was too full of his own thoughts to notice the people in the carriage.

Even if he had looked at the elegant gentleman and lady who got out of the carriage, or at the neat maid who followed them, carrying a child, he would hardly have known the beautiful, richly-dressed baby in her arms to be his own little lost Love whom he had never seen wearing anything finer than a gingham dress and a cotton cap.

The life that began that day for his baby-girl was like the life of a little princess in a fairy-tale. Back of the elegant house that had now become her home, stretched a large, lovely, old garden, radiant with beds of sweet-scented flowers, and cool with fountains and fish-ponds. At the end of its winding gravel-paths, among the swings and the rustic arbors, stood the pretty playhouse of the dead Marianne.

In it, was all that a child-heart could desire—a parlor, dining-room and kitchen on the first floor: a sitting-room and bedroom on the second. Real velvet carpets were on the floors; real lace curtains at the glass windows; while every French toy that could please a baby was to be found in this wonderful little house, now belonging to Love.

Margot's married sister was brought all the way from Quebec to be her nurse. Colette Garde was her name. She was a young widow, with one little girl, whom she fetched with her to Montreal.

The coming of Colette's child was a great joy to the new Marianne. She was a year or two older than Love, and was called Rose-Marie.

All day long, the two little ones were out with Colette in the beautiful garden, playing among the flowers, feeding the fish in the ponds, or keeping house beside the fountain, beneath the waving grape-vines.

When they tired of their play, or when the colder days began to come, they made merry in the big, warm, sunny nursery, next to Madame St. Ange's rooms, where the closets were overflowing with foreign toys; and Madame always came in each afternoon, to drink a cup of warm milk, and eat a bit of sweet cake with the children at their own dainty little table, sparkling with silver, glass, and French china.

Little Love soon learned to bless herself properly, and say her baby-prayers. She had her small prayer-stool beside her new mamma's in the great bed-chamber, and her tiny velvet hassock close to Madame's easy chair, where she recited her scraps of catechism in French, and listened, in time, to the loveliest stories of Blessed Lady and the saints, told to her by Madame, each night, before Colette came to carry her off to bed in the adjoining closet.

On Sundays and feast-days, she went to Mass with her parents in the grand family-coach:

gravely crossed herself with holy water at the church-door (as the others did); and knelt with little Rose-Marie in front of the magnificent, lighted altars, saying her beads upon a little golden rosary that her papa had given her for her own.

All this time, she never knew that, just across the street from her elegant home, her real father and mother were living in the stable-room of Jean Martin, the baker.

Every morning, Lot Leslie pushed his little bread-cart to Mr. St. Ange's door, and handed out the warm, white, French loaves and rolls to Mr. St. Ange's waiter-boy.

He brought, in this way, the very bread to the rich merchant's table, yet never dreamed that his own dear little daughter was feasting on it in that great house, as its most cherished child.

Mistress Leslie's sickness had lasted for many months; and after the dreadful fever left her, she remained so weak and helpless, that her mind and memory seemed altogether gone from her.

She would sit by the hour with her thin hands folded in her lap, and her wild eyes staring blankly at a spot on the tiled floor—saying no word to either husband or friends.

This state of things went on for more than a year.

Poor Lot had given up all hope of ever seeing

his wife a strong and sensible woman again, when, one morning, some fifteen months after her meeting with N'-o-kum and her fall upon the street, Mistress Leslie began to speak a few broken words, and show signs of returning memory.

Her husband often caught her muttering to herself; and the words she jabbered were always the same: "Little Love!—old N'-o-kum!—sold my baby!—big house across the street!"

Lot began to study over these words (so often repeated) wondering what they meant—wondering if they had anything to do with his wife's fainting-fit, more than a year before, and the almost fatal illness that had followed.

Gradually, as the poor shattered mind of the sick woman regained its balance, she began to recall the past, and to piece together the last broken threads in the tragedy of her life.

After a weary while, she was able to tell her patient husband all she had seen and heard, that August day, when the squaw, N'-o-kum, had given up their own little Love to the merchant's maid for a handful of silver and a few shining trinkets.

The painful story almost cost the poor woman a relapse.

Lot Leslie, as he listened to it, began to doubt whether the things she spoke of had really ever happened, or whether they were not part of her

mad ravings—part of the feverish dreams of her long-wandering mind.

In spite of himself, however, he took to watching the doors and windows of the merchant's house. The blood would rush to his head, and his heart stand still, whenever he saw a lovely, little familiar face looking out through the lace curtains, or the graceful form of a richly-dressed child upon the marble steps.

But, sometimes, there were *two* pretty little girls going out from the great house, with their stylish white-capped *bonnes*.

Then, poor Lot would sigh, and rush back into the bake-shop, sorely puzzled and troubled.

Who is he—the slave of an humble baker—that he should dare to claim either of those elegantly-dressed children for his own: or presume to question their nurse, who bore herself with such a grand, proud air?

In the second spring of her captivity, poor Mistress Leslie caught a heavy cold which, (still weak, as she was, from her long illness), carried her off in a few days.

She died a happy, peaceful death, receiving all the last rites of the Church, and lovingly waited on until the end by her devoted mistress.

With her dying breath, she repeated the story of the Indian squaw's having sold little Love to the servant of the rich merchant; and urged

upon Lot to recover the child, and to join the true Church, which makes death so sweet and welcome a guest to its faithful children.

Thus, patient and resigned to all her losses and crosses, kissing the crucifix tenderly, and putting her trust firmly in Christ and His Blessed Mother, the good, suffering woman passed peacefully away to her reward, and was buried, in due time, in the nearest Catholic graveyard, far away from her early home and friends.

The day after her funeral, when poor Lot was sitting alone, sadly enough, in the bake-shop, keeping watch while his master was at supper, a strange man with a squint and a hair-lip came into the shop. He wanted a couple of buns and a cup of coffee which could always be had at that hour at Jean Martin's.

The stranger talked a good deal, as he ate and drank; and the sound of his tongue was homely and sweet to Leslie's ears.

It was the voice of a brother Yankee.

He, too, recognized a countryman in poor Lot; and, as they chatted freely together, it came out that the newcomer was an agent from the New England colonies, sent out to find and bring back all the captives he might discover in Canada.

His name was Wheelwright. In spite of his sinister looks, he seemed to be a genial, pleasant-

mannered man, so that Lot soon told him his whole sad story.

He shed tears as he described the sickness and death of his wife; and the agent's interest in the tale increased, as Leslie repeated the dead mother's story of the sale of her baby by the Indians to the rich merchant, Louis St. Ange.

"Leave this matter to me, friend Leslie," said Wheelwright with a grin, at the end of their talk. "Strike me dead, if we don't soon have you and your little gal safe on the way to the Colonies. But, mum's the word—for here comes your master, if I don't mistake!"

Sure enough, there was Jean Martin, back from his supper, a short, burly, good-humored man, whose rosy, smiling face bespoke him at peace with all the world.

His red cheek suddenly paled, however, and his good humor was rather rudely disturbed, when he learned the agent's business.

He was much attached to Lot; and he felt that his kindness to him and his dead wife deserved some practical return.

But Wheelwright was wily and sweet-tongued. He offered so large a ransom for the Yankee slave, that the baker yielded at last, and consented to let Lot go, provided he agreed to wait a day or two until a man could be gotten to take his place.

This being arranged to please both parties, Wheelwright took his departure, with a sly wink and a parting whisper to Lot:

"Courage, man, and a stiff upper lip! A glass all round—if we don't soon have your little gal safe out of the clutches of these French papists!"

The next day, the head-gardener at Mr. St. Ange's had a new man to help him trim grapevines and set out some spring plants.

One of the under-gardeners chanced to be sick, and in his place, came this stranger who had a squint and a hare-lip, but whose talk was very pleasant and winning, in spite of its Yankee twang.

As the two men worked among the arbors with their ladders and shears, little Love and her playmate, Rose-Marie, skipped merrily through the garden paths, and began their daily game of housekeeping in the pretty playhouse beside the fountain.

Colette Garde, in her white apron and cap, sat knitting on the stone bench, close at hand.

It was not long before the keen-witted man with the hare-lip got to know from the *bonne's* constant calls and cautions to the little ones, which was her own child, and which, the adopted daughter of the rich merchant.

Fortune favored the plans of the Yankee agent.

A message to the head-gardener, from some of his men, took him away, before long, to a distant part of the large garden.

Wheelwright, while tying up one of the vines to its trellis, made a great outcry that he had found a bird's nest full of young ones on top of the arbor.

The little girls, now some five or six years old, ran at once to the foot of the ladder, and begged to see the lovely sight.

The agent refused to let little Love mount the ladder; but helped Rose-Marie to climb a few rounds, when suddenly, having his back to Colette, he tilted the ladder; and the *bonne's* child fell screaming to the ground.

It was not a bad fall; but Colette sprang, like a flash, to her darling, and caught her up in a fright. She began to run toward the great house, kissing and soothing Rose-Marie, who still sobbed and shrieked from the pain of her bruises.

All had turned out as Wheelwright had guessed it would.

The mother-love in the heart of Colette had made her, in her unexpected moment of trial, forget the care of her foster-child.

Little Love stood alone by the arbor, pale and trembling, quite at the mercy of this dreadful stranger, who squinted at her horribly, and had his upper lip slit clean up to his nose.

But the agent made the best of his golden opportunity.

"Poor little gal!" said he soothingly, in rather bad French, but still in his sweet-tongued fashion: "Nurse thinks a heap more of Rose-Marie than she does of Marianne. Strike me dead, if mamma would treat her dear little gal that way! She was at the gadding-gate as I came in to-day. Want to know what she said?"

The little "gal" shook like a leaf—but stood mute as a lamb before its slaughterer.

"Why, she asked me to fetch you to her in an hour's time. What for, my pretty? What else could it be but to take you out for a ride? Gracious me!" he cried, looking at a big old silver watch that he drew from his fob, "it's just the hour now! Come along, dearie. We haven't a minute to lose. We'll find mamma in the carriage, right outside the gadding gate!"

And catching up his hat and coat from the grass, and taking little Love by the hand, he hurried the frightened child through the open gate, and made off with her down a narrow, back alley.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ATTACK ON THE BLOCKHOUSE.

WHEN we last saw the Indian Princess Suitara, she was racing, as fast as her fat legs would carry her, along the river road to the Wyandot village.

With Catharine Tarbuki on one side, Faith Leslie on the other, with Prudence and little Hope bringing up the rear, the Princess and her *suite* fled before the approach of the strange savages in the boats, who, for all they knew to the contrary, might be their enemies, the dreaded Mohawks.

As all ran breathlessly along, Suitara met a young Indian coming alone from a bird-hunt, with a string of quail dangling from his shoulders.

This was her elder brother, *Mescoo-Kinibio* (or the Red Snake).

"*Ni stess!* (my elder brother!)" cried she: "our enemies are coming down the river! It is too late to return to the castle with my maids. We go now, with Catherine Tarbuki to the blockhouse of the French and Wyandots."

"What is that to me?" asked the son of Pontiac, with a scowl.

"It is everything to me!" cried the Princess, haughtily. "You will find my canoe in the cove below Suitara's rock. Take it; row quickly to the camp-fires of the Ottawas, and rouse the tribe to our defence!"

"Our father, the great Pontiac, is away with his braves at Lake George!" grunted Red Snake, as he tried the keen edge of his scalping-knife with his thick thumb.

"But, are you not his eldest son?" urged Suitara, cunningly: "are you not the lion of the Ottawas, the star of the council, the Red Snake of the woods—fearless and venomous? Summon, I beg of you, *Wabisca Mukusu* (the White Eagle)"—and the girl's brown cheek flushed darkly—"summon all the warriors of our people, and bid them sing their war-songs, and dance their war-dance, for the daughter of their great chief is in danger. You and White Eagle must lead them here, at once, to her rescue. *Quethepoh, Ni stess, quethepoh!* (make haste, elder brother, make haste!)"

By the time the girls reached the Wyandot village, all its people had taken refuge in the blockhouse of the French traders, for French and Indians in those days, made common cause.

The blockhouse was very big and strong. It

was built of enormous logs. The upper story projected over the lower, so that the garrison could fire with ease upon any attacking party.

The roof was of shingle, and therefore, in danger from the fire arrows of a native foe.

But, the worst peril arose from the site of the blockhouse. On one side of it was a small lake (long since disappeared); on the other, the Detroit river.

Unfortunately, the bank of the stream rose, at this point, in a high, steep ridge, within forty feet of the blockhouse, giving a natural cover to enemies assailing it. If they even failed, thus protected, on the riverside, they were sure of a chance on the bank of the lake.

Mary Tarbuki, the mother of Catharine, waited for her daughter, and the other maidens, at the door of the fortress.

She was a small, slender woman, not much past thirty, of singular beauty, and of such gentle, quiet ways, that the tribe called her "*Omi-mee*," or the Dove.

A worthy mother, was she, of so saintly a maiden as Catharine of the Wyandots.

Their home, poor as it was, was an abode of such peace, purity, and simple holiness, that Prudence Skillet, their slave, (albeit she retained a good deal of the bigotry of her early Puritan associates), regarded her mistresses with tender

love and reverence, and almost began to think that the religion which made such saints out of savages must be the one established by Christ Himself.

She now watched them closely, as she helped them fill the water buckets, and pass them up to the sentries at the lookout on the roof; and her heart grew calm and full of trust in God, as she saw Mary and Catharine cross themselves quietly in the midst of the work, or press the crucifix that each wore upon her neck-chain, lovingly to their lips.

Both mother and daughter never ceased to cheer the young white girls, who, remembering Swan Island, clung together, pale and trembling.

They never ceased to calm the poor, fussy Princess who fretted and chafed without pause, constantly running to the long, narrow loop-holes, ostensibly, to see if Red Snake and his warriors were approaching to the rescue.

The girls all knew that she was watching less for her brother, than for *Wabisco Mukusu*, the half-breed.

He was known as the White Eagle, because of his fair skin, which he took from his white father; and Suitara had promised to marry him before he went away, that autumn, with the rest of the braves, to the hunting-grounds of the Ottawas.

She hoped that White Eagle's courage and skill, in helping her brother, on this occasion, to rescue her from the siege of the blockhouse, might win the consent of the great Pontiac to their marriage. He had all along refused the hand of his daughter to a half-breed—having an innate scorn for the whites.

Meanwhile, the canoes of the strange Indians had been lost sight of on the river. With the cunning of their race, they had guided their boats into the most hidden curves and thickly-wooded windings of the eastern littoral, so that they reached at last, unobserved, the foot of the ridge, facing the blockhouse.

Their chief was our old friend, Haukimah: and with him, in the leading canoe, were Timothy Grindstone and little Wilson Leslie.

It was not the custom of the Oaughnewagas to take with them to battle so young a boy as Wilson. But, apart from the tribal legend that controlled his fate, the little fellow had shown himself so brave, so sharp-witted, so manly—so worthy, in short, of the dead son, whose place he was supposed to fill—that the chief not only dressed him as a warrior at an age when other boys of his years were running about the camp naked, but carried him with him everywhere, as a sort of mascot.

Stealthily crawling, like cats, under cover of

the high bank, the Caughnewagas drew near, in full force, to the blockhouse. The traders and the Wyandots knew nothing of their approach, until the horrible yell of their enemies burst upon their ears. They were close to the dry ditch, in front of the fortress, before a gun was fired from the upper-ramparts.

Then, Haukimah and his men dropped into the trench, and from that shelter, fired at every loophole, or threw burning arrows, or fire-balls of pitch against the wooden walls.

Some of them pulled down a small outhouse, and made the timbers into a breast-work, behind which they screened themselves, as they pushed forward to the fight. Others crouched behind the steep river-ridge, and fired at their ease, setting in flames the wooden roof of the blockhouse.

The traders rapidly extinguished the red blaze with the water from the women's buckets.

The horrid outcries of the attacking savages, the smoke, the rattle of guns, and the constant leaping up in various quarters of long tongues of fire—made the place seem, for the time, a hot quarter of the infernal regions.

Timothy and little Willy were in the thick of the fight, close to the heels of Haukimah, when the bright eyes of the boy discovered a big company of Indians sneaking up in the direction of the fort from the woody banks of the lake.

Red Snake and White Eagle were bringing on their Ottawas to the rescue!

They had met on the road a scouting-party from their own camp, and now led them forward to the blockhouse.

An immediate rush was made by the Caughnawagas against the plumed and painted warriors of Pontiac.

Horrible was the scene of slaughter that ensued. The warring savages fought like demons; and every once in a while, rang out on the shuddering air, the long, melancholy shriek of the scalp-yell.

No power could keep Suitara from the loopholes. She was all eyes to witness the fate of her tribesmen—all anxiety to follow the movements of White Eagle and her brother.

At last, seeing her fair-haired lover fall beneath the fierce stroke of Haukimah's axe, she set up such a piercing howl, that the sound drew upon her the attention of one of the Caughnawaga archers. He immediately let fly at the loophole the poisoned arrow in his bow, and poor Suitara fell back into Faith Leslie's arms with the bloody dart quivering in her bosom.

"I die, *Ne miss*, I die!" groaned the wretched Princess, stretching out her hands to Catharine, who flew to her side, catching up a bowl of

water as she ran. "Ne miss, *ne goos tow!* (elder sister, I am afraid!)"

"Art thou sorry, dear, for all the sins of thy life?" whispered the angel of the Wyandots, bending her lovely, gentle face close to the dark, troubled visage of her friend.

"Yes, *Ne miss*, sorry from the bottom of my heart!" gasped poor Suitara.

"Dost thou believe in God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost? Thou knowest all the truths of the Holy Catholic Church, Suitara," hurried on Catharine, as she saw a strange, awful look coming into the dying girl's glazing eyes: "Dost thou firmly believe all those truths we were taught by Sister Ursula at school?"

"All—all, *Ne miss!*" groined the Princess, tightening her hold upon her friend's hand, as if she would fain take her with her down the dark, unknown pathway she had begun to tread—which led, she knew not whither.

"Then, wilt thou be baptized?" asked Catharine, "and go in thine innocence to heaven?"

"Yes, to heaven—to heaven!" murmured the Princess faintly; and, while the sweet, old words of her childhood's prayer at the nunnery came back to her lips: "*Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul!*"—Catharine poured the saving waters on her head, saying

distinctly, "I baptize thee, Maria, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen;" shedding, the while, silent tears of joy to know that her best-loved friend was at last a Christian.

Then, the poison mounting to her brain, Suitara began to rave—to chant softly to herself a measure from the song she had sung her hand-maidens, that day, upon the cliff:

"I come, my fair-haired chieftain!
My spirit love!" she sang:
"I come, my own true-hearted!"

And, verily,

"Ere lip and sound had parted,"

the hapless daughter of Pontiac, now swollen to an enormous, purple mass, straightened herself upon the breast of her friend, and slept in the peace of the Lord.

As Catharine closed the heavy lids over the blank, staring eyes, and laid the crucifix upon the cold, ashen lips—a wild shout from the outer world of war, told that the Ottawas had conquered, that the attack on the blockhouse was joyfully at an end.

Caught, as in a death-trap, between the fierce fire of the fortress, and the arrows and axes of the Ottawas, the un'fortunate Caughnewagas fell before their foes, like a field of ripe corn before the hail and wind of an autumnal hurricane.

Haukimah and a small remnant of his braves alone survived, with Timothy and little Wilson, who seemed to bear a charmed life among that whirlwind of whistling arrows and bullets.

Prudence Skillet, glad to escape from the sight of the swollen, purple corpse upon the floor, turned to one of the loopholes, and looking out, saw Haukimah pursued by Red Snake, over the heaps of dead and dying Indians, while Grindstone and the boy bravely followed in defence of their chief.

"Look!" said she to Faith and Hope Leslie, who clung close to her, weeping over Suitara's death: "look at the size of that little imp, and the outlandish way he is tossed off! He's as white as ourselves, too; and so is the fellow beside him, with the ring in his nose, and a tuft on his head, for all the world like a red-headed woodpecker!"

"They are fairer than White Eagle himself!" whispered Faith with a shudder, as she thought of their dead mistress and her slain lover.

"There! the big chief's down!" cried Prudence from her loophole, as Haukimah fell under the tomahawk of Red Snake, who stopped, with a hideous yell, to scalp his victim.

The Yankee woman turned sick, as she groaned:

"Oh! that brute of an Ottawa! His hands

are red with blood! He's off again, now, after the white Injin and his little boy! Down on your knees, children, and pray that the poor creatures may 'scape him!"

This recourse to heaven for help, she had learned from the devout example of Mary and Catharine; and, while the fervent petition of the gentle, kneeling little girls rose up like sweetest incense to the throne of God, Red Snake was gaining upon the tracks of their young brother and the good Grindstone. The latter was making for the river-bank as fast as he could run. There, he hoped to leap down the cliff into one of the empty canoes of the dead Caughnawagas, which he knew to be rocking below.

He drove Willy before him, as he raced for his life; but alas! Red Snake was one of the fleetest runners of his tribe.

Just at the brink of the river, he overtook the two whites. Willy had stumbled over a big stone, and falling, tripped up Timothy, whose pace was too rapid to resist the sudden obstacle.

Gladly, did the devoted serving-man seek to defend the child, with his own body, from the downward stroke of the Ottawa's knife. Although he turned the blow aside from the boy's heart, he could not keep it from making a deep gash in Willy's arm.

At the sight of the fast-flowing blood, Grind-

stone sprang to his feet, and rushed upon Red Snake with the strength of an angry lion when its whelp is attacked.

The Yankee was a larger and more powerful man than the Indian. Clutching him by the throat, he forced him, step by step, to the very edge of the cliff. But, just as he managed, with a supreme effort, to hurl the son of Pontiac over the rocks into the river, the ground crumbled beneath his own feet, and he and Willy dropped together through the cavity.

Not a moment too soon, either; for a number of Ottawas seeing, from afar off, the peril of their young chief, were already running to the rescue shrieking wildly, their uplifted hatchets flashing in the red light of the setting sun.

Beholding the three figures disappear suddenly and simultaneously, however, from the brink of the river, they concluded all had gone down together to a watery grave; and, with the cool philosophy of their race, they stopped to kill and scalp the few Caughnewagas remaining alive upon the field.

The spur of rock, on which Grindstone and the boy landed in their fall, chanced to be the reservoir whereinto the squaws of the Wyandot village had been wont, for years, to cast down all the sweepings of their huts. It was covered to the depth of several feet, with a mass of old

mats, greasy rags, and heaps of straw, hay, and dead leaves.

No bed of silken pillows, therefore, could have been softer than this padded rock to the bruised man and bleeding boy who had fallen thereon.

Better still, it was only a foot or two above the surface of the river, where Grindstone was surprised to see a solitary canoe rocking, as if waiting to take them off.

There was only one man in the boat, and he (O joy!) was a white man! But not like any other white man Timothy had ever seen. He was very tall and slender, and in the prime of life. He had a strongly-marked, merry face; and he wore a strange dress, and a queer cap of black fustian on his head. His long black gown fell in loose folds to his feet, drawn close at the waist by a leathern belt. In this belt, was stuck a big, brass cross with a figure of the Redeemer on it; and a string of wooden beads, with brass medals fastened to them, hung down at his side.

In spite of all these queer things, nevertheless, there was something in the stranger's face that made Timothy put trust in him.

He beckoned him to push his boat closer; and, when the strange man had reached the foot of a sort of natural staircase in the rocks, of which the ledge where Grindstone now stood formed almost the last step, the Yankee leaned over, and

softly begged him to come up, and help him lift the wounded boy into the boat.

The stranger answered him in English, with a strong French accent; and, making fast the canoe to an iron ring in the rocks, climbed up to Willy's side.

The poor child had fainted from loss of blood, and lay upon the ground, the image of death.

While the man in the black gown, kneeling beside him, tore up his pocket-handkerchief, and quickly and skilfully bound up the boy's wounded arm, he questioned Timothy as to the fight at the blockhouse, and all the doings of that day at the Wyandot village.

He had heard the noise of guns, he said, as he rowed down the river; and was just making for the bank, when the body of Red Snake came flying from the rocks above.

"I would have begged the honor of his acquaintance," said the stranger, brokenly, and with a funny smile that set his black eyes to sparkling; "but he gave me no opportunity. He had no sooner touched the water, than he swam away, like a fish, to yonder point, where he disappeared."

"Then, he escaped after all?" muttered Timothy, staring grimly and ruefully at the spot indicated, where the brushwood grew thickly down to the water's edge.

"It is possible," said the stranger, politely, "some of these natives—*ciel!* but they are sometimes hard to kill!"

"This one seems to have nine lives, like a cat," growled Timothy; and then as Willy began to show some signs of reviving strength, he found himself telling this kind stranger not only all the events of the day, but the whole history of his adventures with the boy since the hour of their capture at Swan Island.

"Thank the good God for all His mercies!" said the stranger, rising to his feet and crossing himself, while he lifted his queer cap from his head, and looked up with a beautiful smile to heaven.

"Are you the parson of these parts, sir?" asked Timothy, as the gentleman, having brought some water from the river in a deep shell, poured into it a little cordial from a pocket-flask, which he gave to Willy, now sitting up, and looking very white and weak.

"Not the parson," returned the other, with a pleasant smile, "but one of the priests—Father Peter, at your service, from the Jesuit mission up the river."

"Oh!" said Timothy—surprise and dismay manifest in his round eyes and dropped jaw.

"The dew begins to fall," went on the reverend gentleman, composedly: "and our little boy



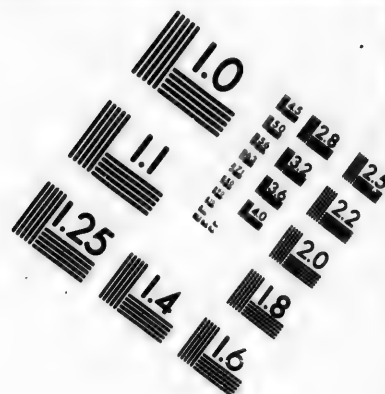
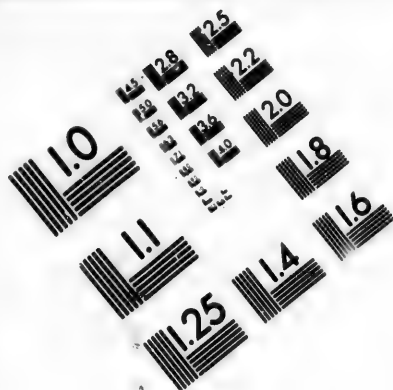
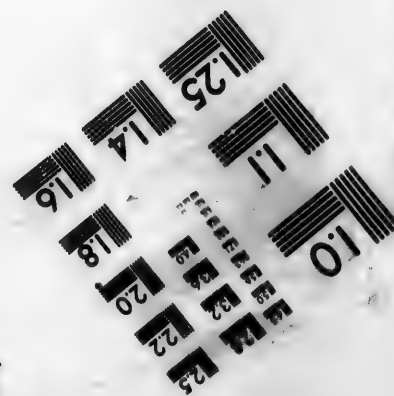
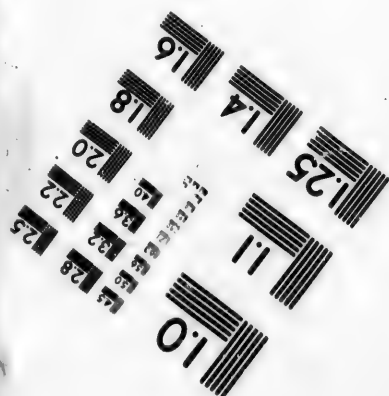
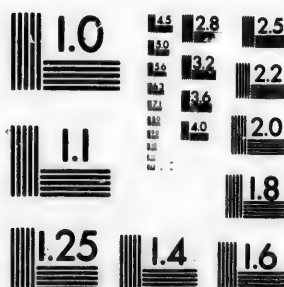


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looks as if he needed better attention than I can give him here."

"You're right there, sir," agreed the Yankee, recovering himself: "and"—looking anxiously around at the brushwood ambush—"that pesky redskin may come at us, agin, at any minute."

"Have no fears," said the priest. "Only help me to get the boy down into my boat, and I'll row you both up to the mission. There, you can have rest and food, and the child will soon be healed of his wound by our good Brother Borgia."

"Oh!" said Timothy again; and as he deposited Willy in the bottom of the canoe, the child dreamily heard him muttering: "Jiminy-jinks! this may turn out to be worse than being a Caughnewaga!"

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT HAPPENED AT THREE RIVERS.

LONG and loud were the cries of little Love Leslie, and bitter were her tears, when the Yankee agent hurried her away from her beautiful home, only to find that neither her mamma nor the carriage were waiting for her in the narrow, back alley. She would have gone on making such an uproar as to bring to their doors the poor dwellers in those squalid huts, and who, at that hour, were all busy with the boiling of their onion soups, had not Wheelwright turned on her the fiercest of faces, and growling like a wolf, threatened, if she made another sound, to whip her within an inch of her life.

She was a brave little creature, as well as clever, and although the man's dreadful squint and forbidding hare-lip filled her with terror, she saw clearly that she must control herself.

Allowing him to wrap her from head to foot in an old black cape that had once (although she knew it not) belonged to her own mother, she choked back her sobs, as he led her, at last, to a shabby, close-covered wagon on runners—for the spring snow was still upon the country roads—

and which, with its strong team of native ponies, waited for them at the end of the lane.

Into this, he had no sooner lifted her, than she was caught in the arms of a man sitting well back in the inner darkness, who squeezed her wildly to his breast, and kissed her pretty face again and again.

The child struggled dumbly in her fright, and tried hard to get away from him, but he only pressed her the closer, and kept groaning, brokenly: "My child! my baby! my own motherless little Love!"

"I'm *not* your child!" said the little one stoutly, in excellent French. "My name is Marianne St. Ange, and I have a papa of my own, and a dear, sweet, beautiful mamma in the big house at home!— Oh! please, I want to go home to them right away!" she cried, bursting afresh into tears; for, as her eyes grew accustomed to the dim light in the wagon, she saw that the man who claimed her so positively as his child was a poor, forlorn-looking creature, in patched clothes that smelled strongly of garlic and stale tobacco smoke.

Lot was not prepared to find her the spoiled, saucy darling she was. Her new life at the St. Anges' had made her very dainty in her tastes and ways. More than that, it had driven from her mind all recollection of her old island home, of her lost parents and relations.

No natural affection, no instinct of blood, now stirred in her breast at the tears and caresses of her poor, disappointed father.

His sentimental emotion, coupled with the proud indifference of the midget, seemed to irritate Wheelwright beyond control.

"Don't set snivellin' there!" he snarled to Lot, as he jumped into the wagon: "but wrap the brat in a blanket, and lay her down among the straw. A lusty specimen, *she* is! Drat her! give me the lines!"—and with a smart crack of the whip, the Canadian ponies pricked up their ears, shook their rough manes, and trotted away with their burden up the road by the St. Lawrence river.

It was a long and weary journey to the town of Three Rivers. There, several other New England captives, whom the Yankee agent had either bought or stolen from their French masters, were waiting for him to convey them home to the colonies.

Several times, he halted by the way to refresh his horses, and buy food for the party, as well as "sweeties" and toys for the little girl.

With these, he coaxed her along, telling her that a relation of her French father lived at Three Rivers; and that, after spending a few days with his children, she should be brought safely back to her home in Montreal.

Having been fooled by him once before, little

Love did not put much faith in Wheelwright's statements or promises, but hard luck, and varying experiences had sharpened her wits, and made her precociously politic.

She had now sense enough to keep quiet in trying circumstances, nursing her dolls and eating her candy, while she cuddled close to Leslie's side, with the innate feeling, poor child! that he was kinder, and more to be trusted than the agent.

On the road, Wheelwright heard of one or two other captives, along the St. Lawrence, whom he concluded to ransom or rescue as quickly as possible.

Accordingly, when the big inn at Three Rivers was reached at last, he left Lot and his little daughter in the care of the innkeeper and his wife, and hurried back, the next day, to the deliverance of the other white slaves.

The inn, *L'agneau d'or* (or the Golden Lamb), was very full, just then, of traders and released captives.

As the latter were poor and unable to pay for their keep, it was the custom of the place to give them work in the kitchen, or around the stables, so that they might not eat their bread in idleness—until such time as Wheelwright should return to carry them off to New England.

Thus it fell out, that Lot Leslie, on his arrival

at the Golden Lamb, was set to chopping wood and fetching water for the kitchen wenches; and, as little Love soon discovered that the horrid man with the hare-lip had again told her a lie, and that the innkeeper (if he were indeed a cousin of her French father—which she already doubted—), had certainly no little children for her to play with, the small maid was left very much to herself and her own devices.

A favorite fairy-tale she had heard, long ago, at bedtime, from Nurse Colette, often came to her mind, as she sat on the sunny step of the inn, rocking her doll upon her knee.

It was the story of a little princess, who was once stolen from her father's palace, and carried off by bad fairies to an ogre's castle. But, the castle gate being left conveniently open, one morning, the little princess escaped from the garden (where she was being fattened into a delicious tid-bit for the ogre's table), and made her way into the public road.

She walked a long, long while in the dust and heat of a summer's day, ready to faint with fatigue and fright; but, after awhile, a golden chariot drawn by milk-white horses, came rolling toward her, along the road.

It stopped close to the little runaway, and the door was opened by a fairy footman in a livery of pale blue and silver lace. Out, popped a lovely

little lady in a trailing cloak of whitest minever, over a royal purple brocade, sparkling with diamonds.

A crown of gold and brilliants was on her charming head, and a silver wand in her tiny, white-gloved hand.

This was the princess's fairy godmother.

She had been on a visit to Queen Mab at the time of her godchild's abduction, and was only now returning after a delightful sojourn at the court.

She touched the runaway with her wand; and at once, her dusty rags were changed into a robe of rose-pink satin, covered with jewels; her coarse shoes became pink velvet slippers studded with pearls; and the fairy godmother, whirling her into the shining coach, drove her back, splendid and triumphant, to her father's palace, where she lived ever afterward in peace and plenty, while the ogre died unhappy and hungry.

A bright thought came suddenly to little Love, sitting alone upon the sunny doorstep.

"Why couldn't I run away like *Princess Belle-belle*?" mused she: "why couldn't I find my way back, like her, to my own dear home?"

Every one was busy in the inn, and around it. Lot Leslie had just turned the corner of the path from the great old well, carrying his buckets of water to the back kitchen. No human eye was

watching the little fearless girl. She drew closer the old black cape on her shoulders, tied tighter the strings of her garden hat, and trotted off alone down the road.

The *Princess Belle-belle* had started again upon her travels. But, instead of the old-time fairy godmother in ermine and jeweled brocade, a very different sort of deliverer was, that moment, driving to meet the runaway.

It was a bright, spring day.

There was still some snow on the roads, and in the shady spots; but the sun shone gloriously, and a soft wind was blowing from the south. The trees showed a faint hint of green; and, here and there, a stray bird twittered among the branches.

Little Love trudged bravely along, humming to herself brokenly, in baby fashion, some verses of an old French *cantique* to Mary, Queen of Heaven, which may be rendered thus in English:

"Blessed are we, the children of a Mother
Who, in her grace surpasses all;
Hasten, then haste, with gladness to her altar:
There, at her feet, in meekness, fall.

"Slowly the winter faded from the mountain,
Leaving the streams all chainless, free:
Buds of the meadows, waters of the fountains,
All are waking, Mother, to thee!"

The child had just begun to sing the last stanza:

"We, too, will praise thee, sweet and stainless Mother,
We will unite with flow'r and bird,
And, round thine altar thro' all the sacred seasons,
Shall lays of thy glory be heard!"

when, looking back over her shoulder, to make sure of her safety, she beheld Lot Leslie come to the inn door, and, with one swift, wild glance about him, plunge madly after her down the road.

Little Love crossed herself devoutly (as she had been taught by Madame to do, in moments of danger), and broke into a frightened run.

She saw a dark vehicle coming rapidly towards her from the other direction.

Could it be the chariot of the fairy god-mother? Would the lovely little lady descend from it, in her furs and jewels, and touch her with her silvery wand?

Alas! as the vehicle drew nearer, she saw it was only a shabby sleigh.

In it, was an ugly old squaw, driven by a young Indian *sanop*, who whooped loudly as he discovered Lot making chase for his little daughter, who was striving with all her speed to escape him.

Quick as lightning, the old squaw leaned over

the side of the sleigh, caught Love from the ground to a seat beside her, and cried out to the young Indian to turn his horse about, and drive like the wind.

In less time than it takes to tell it, the savages were dashing along the road to Quebec, bearing the white child far away from her distracted father.

Old N'o-kum (for it was she) was well aware of the value of her prize.

She knew the little girl to be the adopted daughter of the great merchant; and she was sure Louis St. Ange would pay a rich ransom to the one who restored the child to Madame's arms.

The Indians of those days often stole away captives they had themselves sold to the Canadians, in order to extort presents for their return, from their French masters, to whom they had grown either precious or useful.

Therefore, the old squaw smiled kindly upon poor little Love, who was shedding silent tears of fright and disappointment.

It was all so different from the story of *Princess Belle-belle*. No lovely robe of pink satin covered with jewels; no pink velvet slippers studded with pearls!

She was still in her torn and dirty clothes; and this ugly old woman who held fast to her, must surely be the sister of the ogre who car-

ried off *Belle-belle*. In spite of all her tears and trouble, however, she fell asleep, after awhile, cuddled down under the strong-smelling buffalo robes, with her head in N'-o-kum's lap. And thus, sleeping heavily, and dreaming broken dreams of Madame and Margot, Colette and Rose-Marie, with wild interludes of being chased by Wheelwright and Lot Leslie, the poor little creature knew not when the sleigh had stopped; but awoke, next morning, to find herself in the Indian mission at Lorette.

She cried bitterly while N'-o-kum gave her a plentiful breakfast of boiled hominy and maple syrup.

She missed the white rolls and toothsome jellies—the damaak, silver, and crystal of her Montreal breakfast table; and she begged the old woman, with many a winning caress, to take her back to her pretty mamma.

But the wily squaw would only grunt from time to time: "*Awis wabank!* (after to-morrow,)" or "*Panima—panima!* (by and by, by and by!)"

Seeing that the child still kept on sobbing and grieving, N'-o-kum took her out into the streets of the Indian village, where the savages flocked around her, and tried to pacify and please her.

She was such a pretty child with her big, black eyes and clear pink and white skin that the

Indians never tired looking at her. It was one of their delights to catch up her long, soft, red curls, and pass them through their fingers.

If Love had been older and wiser she might have had some terrible fears and suspicions of their scalping-knives, at these moments. But,

"Ignorance is bliss"

oftentimes, and the little girl only noticed that none of the females of the tribe had red hair like her own. She supposed that that was what made her ringlets attractive to these queer people, who brought their sticks of charcoal, and drew pictures of deers, wolves, bears and fishes on her soiled white skirt.

When they proceeded to paint her fair cheeks in the Indian fashion, she cried aloud with resentment; and no one could quiet her, until a boy of ten, or so, ran up, and rubbed the yellow paint from her soft cheek with a corner of his blanket.

This boy was then given her for a playmate.

There was something about him that had drawn her to him from the first moment she saw him.

He was almost as fair as herself, yet he was dressed like a little Indian chief. He wore a ruffled shirt, leggings trimmed with beads and many-colored ribbons, and a handsome pair of

embroidered moccasins. On his head, he wore an otter-skin cap, with a tall bunch of scarlet plumes in its front.

A handsomer, or more manly, little fellow it would have been hard to find, with his bright, dark eyes and curling auburn hair. He was as supple as a reed, and as straight as an arrow.

Very kind and gentle, he was, to little Love. Taking her by the hand, he led her away from the other Indians to the best-looking house in the village, standing close to a large, frame building, on top of which was a big yellow cross. This last was the Roman Catholic chapel of St. Anthony—for the tribe of St. Francis was a Catholic one, converted to Christianity, many years before, by the Franciscan Fathers, known as the "*Recollects*."

The mission was, at present, in the care of the Jesuits.

When the boy in the ruffled shirt and beaded leggings rapped at the door of the house next the church, an old man in a black gown and skull-cap came out, and smiled at the children in a friendly way.

"Well, Joseph?" said he to the boy, in French, "what is it now?"

"Is Père Eugene at home yet, Brother?" questioned the lad in the same tongue.

"Nay, nay," replied the old man, shaking his

wise head, "the Father is on the Easter visitation to many scattered tribes. It takes a long time to look them all up, and attend to their souls. It may be weeks before he gets back. But, who is this little lady you have brought us, this morning?"

"I know not," returned the boy, cautiously, in the Huron tongue. "N'-o-kum fetched her to the village, last night."

"She is a pretty little girl," said the Brother: whereat, Love guessing from their looks and words that they talked about herself, burst into tears, and began to sob:

"I want my mamma! I want to go back to my dear, sweet mamma, and to papa, and Margaret, and Colette, and Rose-Marie!"

"Take her to see St. Anthony, Joseph," said the good Brother, rather flustered by the child's tears and outcries. "Teach her that *he* is the saint who finds all that is lost for those that invoke him;" and away he bustled back to his kitchen, whence the smell of burning meat gave him to know that the dinner of bear's flesh was being overdone on the neglected spit.

Joseph soothed and petted his little companion as well as he could, gathering some early wild flowers for her, and leading her by the hand to a circular plot of ground, in front of the church, railed in by a very pretty rustic fence.

In the centre of this, was a pedestal of stone, some four feet high, on which, under a hood of native oak, stood a beautiful statue of a saint, bearing in his arms an image of the Infant Jesus.

This was St. Anthony of Padua, in his brown habit with its cincture of knotted cord, his tonsure and his rosary. His face was smiling and gentle; and the lovely face of the Holy Babe in his embrace, looked up at him with an expression of confiding tenderness, very touching to see.

Around the base of the statue, some words were printed in Latin, which neither Joseph nor Love could read.

If the little girl could have made them out, she would have jumped for joy. As it was, however, she followed the boy very soberly, when he unlatched the gate in the rustic fence, and led her into the enclosure.

There was a kneeling-bench before the feet of the statue, large enough to accommodate two persons.

Joseph drew his new friend down beside him on this homely *prie-dieu*; and began to explain to her all he had been taught about St. Anthony, and of his power to find lost persons and things for those who pray to him devoutly.

While the little girl listened with deep interest, lisping after him her simple petition to the Wonder-worker of Padua, to restore to her, by

his prayers, her lost parents and friends, there were others of her blood who were beginning, at that hour, to draw nearer to her, in the Faith of Christ—the faith of that great Household, whose children all rejoice in a common Father and Mother—a Divine Father, a heavenly Mother, devoted, unfailing, imperishable.

In the lodge of the widow, Mary Tarbuki, Faith and Hope Leslie had found a peaceful home, after the battle of the blockhouse, on the banks of the Detroit.

Prudence Skillet was already there, as the faithful slave of Mary and Catharine. When she represented to her mistress the sad state of the two little girls whom poor Suitara's death had left at the mercy of the fierce Ottawa squaws—Pontiac's many wives—the saintly Wyandot woman and her daughter eagerly agreed to buy the young Yankees from Suitara's stepmother for a handful of plumes and trinkets.

A zeal and piety like those of the early Christians burned brightly in the breasts of Mary and Catharine. They hungered for the salvation of souls; and it was mainly the hope of leading the white sisters to the True Faith (of which Prudence, they suspected, had already begun to see the force and beauty) that induced them to purchase the two girls from the Ottawaa.

They knew them, and Prudence, as yet, only by the Indian names Suitara had given them.

Not since the fatal morning when the young Leslies had been torn from their happy home on Swan Island, had they known such true peace and joy as they now tasted in the lodge of the Tarbukis. Suitara had not been a cruel mistress; but, nevertheless, their daily life had often been made miserable for them by her caprices, her jealous moods, her many savage tricks and turns of fancy.

How different all was in the home of Mary and Catharine! How sweet it was to serve these gentle, unselfish women, who bore in their beautiful faces the peace and love of God! It was easy to see that they sought Him and His divine Will, with a single heart, by day and night—that, like their beloved Master, they went about doing good continually to their people.

The baptism of the Princess in the blockhouse had made a powerful impression on Faith and Hope.

Catharine had looked to them, that gloomy day, as an angel of light and mercy.

The unearthly peace and brightness that settled on Suitara's brow at the moment of death, had seemed merely a reflection of the lovely light that always shone from Catharine's tranquil face.

Her mother, "Mistress Tarbucket," as Prudence

called her—*Omi-Mee* (or the Dove) as the tribe named her—was a simple, fervent soul, whose life was one long act of prayer, penance, and good works.

Even old *Why-washi-brooch*, Catharine's blind grandmother—Anne by baptism, but whom Miss Skillet hilariously styled "old White-wash Brush"—edified all around her by the singular perfection of her life. Sitting constantly on a mat, in a corner of her daughter's lodge, telling her prayer-beads, or speaking to the young people when they drew near her, in words of living faith and glowing piety, it seemed to the little white girls as if a very seraph were hidden in the homely shape of the old brown, wrinkled, sightless woman.

Her knowledge of divine truths was remarkable—plainly, a special gift of the Holy Ghost; and the three Yankee slaves learned from her grave, gentle lips, many precious things about God and salvation, of which they had been utterly ignorant all their lives.

These, they could not very well escape listening to, as the blind grandmother held a regular Catechism class, each day, in her corner of the lodge, to which the little Wyandots were fetched by their mothers; who daily resorted to Mary Tarbuki for medicine, advice, consolation in their trials, or reconciliation with their enemies.

Mary was, indeed, almost worshipped by those simple children of the forest, who recognized in her, solely by their Christian instincts,

"A perfect woman, nobly plann'd,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet, a spirit still and bright,
With something of an angel light."

Under the quiet roof of this dear *Omi-Mee*, the fall and winter months passed peacefully away; and if, at times, Faith or little Hope fretted meekly in secret for the old Swan Island home and the dear ones they had lost, if they longed to be out, once more, on the wide, grey beach, gathering shells among the rocks, or running breezy, rosy-cheeked races in the blithe salt winds—Prudence, good woman, was ever at hand, ready to quiet them at night, when she soothed them to sleep, or cheer them, by day, when they labored at her side, with her encouraging quotations from the Bible, such as: "When thou passeth through the water, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee;" or, again: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God? Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it."

Thus blindfolded, as it were, and quite uncon-

WHAT HAPPENED AT THREE RIVERS. 109

scious of the fate before them, the three slaves were being led by their household angels, (as were many, of o'd, in the days of early Christian Rome)—conducted through the strange, quiet darkness of their time of bondage into the true freedom of the children of God—into the brightness of that city which "needeth not sun nor moon to shine in it: for the glory of God hath enlightened it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof."

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CHAPTER IX.

THE MISSION OF THE ASSUMPTION.

NIGHT had fallen by the time Father Peter's canoe shot into the bay, shaped like a half-moon, and washing what was then known as Montreal Point, but now marked on our maps as Sandwich, in Ontario.

Timothy Grindstone, who sat in the prow of the boat, holding in his arms the almost lifeless form of little Wilson Leslie, was surprised to see a number of bright lights, flashing here and there, along the shore, dancing through the darkness, like so many shooting meteors, or wandering will-o'-the-wisps.

Stepping from the boat to the beach, he saw that these were torches carried by Indians, as the Christian Hurons came running quickly from their wigwams to welcome the priest.

The news of the fight at the blockhouse had reached them through some runners of their tribe (for the Wyandots and the Hurons formed, after all, but one great family); and these men were eager to hear details of the battle.

Father Peter was deaf to their questions, how-

ever, until they had fetched him a sort of canvas stretcher, made from an old sail, on which he laid the limp figure of little Wilson, bidding them carry him gently up to the mission house.

The priest, with Timothy, led the way.

Some three hundred feet above the shore, and overlooking the strait, stood then a good-sized building known as the Huron Mission-house of Detroit. Close by, was the mission church of our Lady of the Assumption, dedicated less than fifty years before.

It was built of hewed, upright timber; and was about one hundred and fifty feet long. There was a large bell in its belfry, which began to ring just as Father Peter and his party drew near.

Immediately, those who carried the stretcher stood still; and all fell upon their knees save Timothy, who did not know that it was the Angelus bell, announcing, even in that wild spot, the Incarnation of the Eternal Son of God, and the glory of His Virgin Mother.

The church-door stood open, and Father Peter, lifting his cap, knelt on the threshold, and said the prayers aloud—all, save Timothy and Wilson, responding with solemn devotion.

Somehow or other, it moved Grindstone almost to tears, to look on those kneeling savages, bowing their heads, and uniting in fervent prayer

with their priest. And he was near enough to one of the torches, to watch the Father gazing with adoring eyes into the fragrant darkness of the church up to the dim outline of the white altar, with its perpetual lamp burning before it, like a holy star.

He was still pondering over the scene, when he found himself, with the others, before the big Mission house, with its massive stone chimneys and dormer windows, brought into clear view by the light of the full moon, but just arisen.

On the step, in that flood of silvery light, stood a slight, venerable man, with the face of a scholar and a saint. He wore a black gown and cap similar to those of Father Peter.

This was the Superior of the mission—Father Armand of the Society of Jesus. He still bore traces of the paralysis, that had stricken him down, nine years previous.

He gave a warm, gentle welcome to Timothy : and (lame as he was) helped with his own hands to carry poor little Wilson into the Infirmary of the Mission—a long, exquisitely neat room, with a double row of little white beds.

On one of these, Father Peter laid the wounded boy ; and Brother Borgia, then in charge of the sick, proceeded to examine and dress his bleeding arm. This done, and his face bathed with a solution of vinegar and water, the little fellow

opened his eyes with a deep sigh of relief. It was the first time he had rested on a comfortable bed since the awful morning of the surprise at Swan Island.

Looking languidly before him, he saw on the opposite wall, a great crucifix of carved wood. At its base, burned a taper-lamp of scarlet glass. The red flame threw its flickering light upon the pierced feet of the Christ, until they seemed to be bathed in blood.

"Who is that Man, Timmie? And why does He bleed?" whispered the boy to Timothy, who was bending anxiously over him: "Have the Indians wounded Him, too?"

"Be still, dear child! You will learn all about it when you are well," put in Father Peter, who had caught the faint, pathetic whisper. "Give him a sleeping-draught, Brother; and then, we will leave him in your hands for a good night's rest. *Dieu vous garde, chère enfant!*"—with a kindly touch on the boy's pale brow.

And while Brother Borgia lifted Willy in his strong arms, and gave him the draught, the two priests led Grindstone, rather reluctantly away, to take supper with them in the refectory close at hand.

Never had poor Timothy sat down to table in company of such perfect gentlemen as Father Armand and Father Peter. But they soon put

him completely at his ease; and he was surprised to find himself laughing heartily at Father Peter's merry sallies, while he never tired looking at the grave, gentle eyes of the quiet Superior—eyes that seemed to be always gazing into the unseen delights of the Other World.

After an excellent supper, which his hard day of fighting and exhausting excitement made very acceptable, Timothy was given a pipe of good tobacco, and invited to join the priests around the blazing fire.

Seated in the only easy-chair the room contained, Father Peter drew him on to repeat to the Superior, the story he had told him, that afternoon, on the cliff by the river. And, as Timothy described the dreadful attack on the Swan Island fort, and the slaughter of old Captain James Wilson and his wife, Father Peter asked many questions about Lot Leslie's folks; and wrote down in a little book, the names and ages of all the members of that scattered family.

"We've never seen any of them since we parted in the boats," said Grindstone sadly. "They may all be dead, now, save Willy and me! And what are we?" (he added with some bitterness as he looked down at his blood-stained rags and torn moccasins): "what are we, but a pair of half-naked savages? We've lost all likeness to civilized humans."

Then, he went on to remark how gladly he would swap his Indian toggery, on the spot, for a decent suit of white men's clothes. All the more, because Haukimah and most of his nation had been slain, that day, in the fight at the blockhouse.

But Father Armand knew well the habits of the natives, and how strong and solemn were the ties of adoption into any of the tribes. He advised Timothy to have patience, and wait until he was sure that the vengeance of the surviving Caughnewagas would not pursue him and little Leslie to the death. It was the custom of the tribes (he said) to follow, like sleuth-hounds, and to torture and kill any "pale-face" who deserted from the camp after having been once adopted, as they had been, in the place of their illustrious dead.

"Talk about standin' in dead men's shoes!" said Timothy, with a grim laugh, "why, sirs, it ain't a touch to meanderin' around in a dead Caughnewaga's moccasins!"—but he was forced to submit to his fate, seeing how wise and reasonable were the Superior's arguments. He contented himself, therefore, with drawing out the silver rings from his nose and ears, secretly resolving to do the same bold office for Willy on the morrow.

And, Father Peter, observing presently that

the poor fellow began to yawn a great deal, and to grow very stiff and drowsy in the unusage of a soft chair and a comfortable fireside, led him away, right willingly, to bed, in one of the little white cots close to Wilson's, where he was soon wrapped in a deep, refreshing sleep.

The silvery sound of a chiming bell awoke Timothy very early in the morning; and, stealing softly to the window, he was surprised to see the two priests in their black gowns and cloaks already quitting the house, and making their way down the road.

Some impulse moved him to follow them.

Seeing that Willy was still breathing quietly in a sound, restful slumber, Timothy caught up his blanket, and crept out to the hall, where he found the great entrance door unfastened.

He passed through it into the road, along which were hurrying many Hurons — men, women, and children.

All seemed bound for one common point. Some of these eyed Grindstone with natural curiosity. Others recognized him at once as the white Caughnewaga the Black Robe had brought home with him, the past night, in his canoe.

No one spoke to or molested him; but he kept pace with the swiftest, until they ended by showing him the way to the big church near the river.

Timothy thought to himself that it was a mighty queer time of the day to go to meeting. He pushed on with the crowd, however: and, once in the church, he got behind one of the thick wooden pillars that supported the roof, where he stood upright, seeing everything, but himself quite hidden from sight.

When he gazed curiously about him, he found he had no need to hide himself from view.

Nobody looked at him—nobody looked at anything but the white altar, on which candles were burning, and some strange objects were shining.

Once, when a boy, he had gone to meeting in a country town. What had struck him, there, had been the easy sociability of all concerned. The congregation had chatted, and exchanged bits of gossip in the pews: the parson had walked down the aisle, shaking hands with old and young, and saying a word, here and there, about the weather, the crops, and what not.

There was nothing solemn—nothing worshipful.

In this Indian Mission church, all seemed absorbed in the service; every eye was riveted on what was going on at the altar.

And Timothy, looking steadily in that direction, thought it the strangest sight he had ever seen.

A white man was there, old and grey, and dressed up in a black gown, surmounted by another of white linen and lace, over which he wore a queer green silk overcoat, without sleeves, and covered with gold embroidery.

He was as busy as he could be at the altar, now reading out of a big, gilded book, again, doing something with a golden drinking-cup and a little round gold plate.

He kept bowing, and turning, and saying queer words softly, in a tongue unknown to Timothy; and two little Indian boys, wearing long scarlet gowns, gave him, at one time, what looked like wine and water out of a brace of small glass bottles from a table close by; and at another, offered him water to wash his fingers with, and a clean napkin to dry them.

After awhile, a little bell rang, up near the altar; and, at the sound, all the people in the church fell down upon their faces.

Timothy, also, dropped down upon his knees.

He could not help himself. The silence was profound. He was trembling from head to foot. He had a strange feeling in his untutored heart that Something very solemn and awful was going on at that lighted altar!

Some One was there Whom he did not know, as yet: but Whom, for the first time, he burned to know, and love, and serve, all the days of his life!

Full of these strange thoughts and desires, and bewildered by all he saw, it was a long while before he recognized the old man in the green silk robe, who lifted the white Wafer and the golden Cup, and bowed down, adoringly, before Them. It was long (or it seemed long to him), before he understood that he was really Father Armand, the Superior of the mission—the priest with the wonderful eyes.

But he had a great many questions to ask Father Peter, after breakfast, that morning, when the merry, sociable priest took him to see the great Forge (with its brawny armorer) that had been builded near the crescent bay, and where weapons and farming tools were made for all the male adults of the mission, white or red.

Later in the day, the priest brought him to the Mission storehouse, to see Brother La Tour and his helper, Brother Regis, working busily among their huge piles of furs and blankets, their well-filled shelves of paints, cutlery, cotton, and sparkling trinkets.

Here, (thanks to the wise forethought of Father Armand!) the Huron hunters could dispose of their peltry to the English traders, without risking, to do so, a long, dangerous journey through hostile territory.

When Timothy and the priest entered the big store, it was thronged with traders, hunters, run-

ners of the woods (*coureurs de bois*), or bush-rangers.

A motley crowd, they were, sitting or lounging about on bales and boxes, most of them in blanket-coats, or frocks of smoked deerskin, their rifles beside them, and a knife and a hatchet in each stout belt.

In their midst, a young Huron hunter, tall, shapely, and handsome as a bronze statue, was questioning Brother Regis as to why some men (like himself) were red of skin, while other some (like Regis) were white as the snows of winter.

Before the busy lay-Brother could make fitting reply, a bold, clear voice rose out of the crowd, and smote all the rest into silence, as one of the traders began to recite, in French, an old Indian legend.

It was an odd, musical rhyme, given rapidly, with striking gestures, and with many a flash of white teeth and brilliant eyes in the speaker's dark Canadian face.

Stripped of some of their native grace and force, the words might be made to read thus in homely English :

" Before her father's wigwam, painted golden by the sunset,
In scarlet blanket, crouching near the trader's blue-eyed mate,
Swa-nec, the chieftain's daughter—her black hair bound with
wampum,
Watched stealthily a group beyond the palisade's gate.

THE MISSION OF THE ASSUMPTION. 121

"Her father in the foreground, brown and brawny, plumed and painted,
Ev'ry inch a kingly savage, with his scalp-knife in his belt,
Pointed out a distant valley to a fair New England stranger,
Whose negro servant near them, by his master's trappings,
kneelt.

"Closely watching, like a panther, her velvet eyes half-open,
The little Swa-nee murmured to the trader's wife, apart:
'Brown as autumn leaves, my father; white as snow, the pale-
faced chieftain;
Black, the other, as the storm-cloud ere the lightning rends its
heart!

"Tell me, woman, wise in magic, hath Manitou a meaning
When He paints the warriors of the nations, white, and
brown, and black?"
— The trader's blue-eyed helpmate smiling answered, sideways
leaning,
As she shifted to her bosom the baby at her back:

"Swa-nee, it is a legend, by the Seminoles narrated,
Told at night around their camp-fires, where the trader's rest
hath been:
That Manitou, when earth was new, three white-skinn'd braves
created,
And led them to a little lake, bidding them wash therein.

"The first sprang promptly at his word, and, plunging, came out
fairer
Than when he entered; but his bath had troubled all the
lake;
And he who followed, white at first, was stained with copp'rish
laver;
While he who lingered last, came forth as black as loam could
make!

"Then, Manitou cast down upon the grass before the bathers,
Three packages, safe hidden in the bison's swarthy skin :
And bade them make their choice. 'Tis said, the black man
seized the hugest,
And op'ning, found the iron spade, the hoe, and rake, within.

"The red man grasped his pack, in turn ; and lo ! within it, hid-
den,
Were fishing-rod and tomahawk, were bow and arrows bright ;
While, within the snake-skin wrappings which, at last, the
Pale Face lifted,
Were ink-horn, quill, and parchment—a burden, strangely
light !

"So thou seest, chieftain's daughter ! ' laughed the bold wife of the
trader,
As she sprang upon her feet, and slung the baby at her back :
'Thou seest, little Swa-nee, that Manitou *Aash* meaning
When he paints your warriors brown, ours white, and others,
black ! ' "

Some of the French traders clapped their hands
in praise of their fellow, as he finished his re-
cital ; but most of the Indians sat silent, motion-
less—staring ahead of them either sullenly or
stupidly.

The young Huron who had questioned Brother
Regis scowled askance at the Canadian ; and
Brother La Tour seemed uneasy when a sturdy
English trader (Henry Alexander by name), be-
gan to tell the company about his visit to Fort
Du Quesne, four months before.

He described, in the Huron tongue, his having

stood upon the rampart of the fort, one lovely summer morning, and seen the kegs of bullets and gunpowder broken open by the half-crazy followers of Captain Beaujeau—all helping themselves at will.

He told how he had gone with Athanase, the Huron, to the dark ravines where the French and Indians trapped Braddock and his troops on that fatal ninth of June.

He had seen the splendid columns of the British regulars, in their scarlet uniforms, file along the narrow path by the Monongahela, the music playing gaily, and the sunlight sparkling on their polished bayonets. There, followed the noble band of Virginia rangers, headed by their young leader, GEORGE WASHINGTON, with his aids, the gallant Gage and Gates—all afterwards to become famous in the Revolutionary War.

He gave a thrilling account of the battle in the gloomy ravine; and his voice sank almost to a whisper, as he described the shocking end of his countryman, Braddock; while Washington, (he said), rode through the dreadful carnage, calm and unhurt, although he saw two horses killed under him, and four bullets pierce his very clothing.

Timothy felt much attracted to this speaker. Small wonder at it. Henry Alexander was really a very superior man—college-bred, and wonderfully informed, as well, by extensive travel.

His tongue had a winsome sound; and his looks pleased the Yankee more than those of any he saw about him.

He had some little talk with him in English, before Father Peter (who had been going about among the other traders and hunters, saying a good word, here and there, to his spiritual children), came to fetch Timothy back to the Mission house.

Here they found little Willy up, and dressed—looking rather pale and weak, it is true, but propped with pillows in the easy-chair by the fire, and quite ready for his dinner.

Father Armand had been kindly showing him a big book, full of colored prints; and it was easy to see that the gentle old priest had completely won the boy's heart.

At table, his seat was beside the Superior's. He listened as keenly as Timothy to the talk between the two priests—his perilous life among strangers having made him unusually observant for a child of his age.

Father Peter spoke of some indifferent matters at the Mission store and at the Forge; of René de Couagne and Louis St. Ange, the rich factors in Montreal; and of messages that had just come from the farm at Bois Blanc (or White Wood) as to fowls and eggs.

The horses, Major and White Back, were do-

ing well, (he said), and *Souris*, the mare, was lively as ever.

He had just begun to tell that Charles Parant, the carpenter, had been bespoken to make a new altar-rail in the church, two closets for the vestments and linens in the vestry, and a couple of chapels, in alcoves, each side the main altar, when, after a soft rap at the door, a young Indian girl came hurriedly into the room.

She wore a skirt and sack of blue flannel: and a large, brass crucifix hung about her neck.

Her face was so beautiful, and her slight form so modestly graceful, that, at the first glance, Willy Leslie thought one of the pictures on the wall—that of the Loveliest of Women, in a blue cloak—had stepped down from its frame to stand before them.

"My Father!" she said, fixing on the Superior her large, dark eyes, as soft and liquid as a forest fawn's; "there is sorrow in the lodge of *Nigah-wei* (my mother). Last night, Anne *Why-washibrooch*, my grandmother, was stricken for death. All day long, she has called for Père Pierre——"

"And Père Pierre shall go to her at once," interposed Father Armand, kindly: "Is your canoe in waiting, Catharine Tarbuki?"

"I came up in the boat of Meloche, the friend of Pontiac," said the girl, as Father Peter went quickly from the room, to get what he wanted

from the church. "Melooche was fishing off our rocks this morning. He waits now in the bay, my Father, to take us back to the village."

"Go, then, my child," said the Superior. "Every moment is precious. Father Peter will meet you at the church with the Viaticum and the holy oils. Make ready everything decently for him at home; and may our dear Lord grant your grandmother the grace of a happy death with its crown of everlasting glory!"

"Amen, my Father," whispered the Indian girl, solemnly; and Timothy and Willy both thought her face one of heavenly beauty, as she dropped upon her knees at the Superior's feet, and, with arms crossed upon her breast, bowed her dark, graceful head to receive his benediction.

A moment more, and she had vanished, noiselessly as a lovely dream.

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CHAPTER X.

STRANGERS FROM THE FOREST.

PRUDENCE SKILLET was trudging along the river-road toward the forest, stopping every now and then, to poke with a stout stick among the bushes, or stooping, to look closer at the wild things that grew in her path.

She was searching for the wild mustard plant, or for a native root that resembled the horse-radish.

She had a very good knowledge of herbs, and was skilled in their use among the sick.

Once (a year before), she had nursed old Captain Wilson safely through a stroke of apoplexy; and now, having seen Mary Tarbuki's aged mother, Anne, drop down in the lodge, as if struck by lightning, she remembered that hot mustard foot-baths and neck-poultices had been the first things to relieve the captain's head.

Leaving Mary and Catharine to watch beside the blind grandmother, who lay, breathing heavily, upon a bed of skins on the lodge-floor, she set Faith and Hope to kindling a fire, gypay-fashion, and swinging over it a big pot of river water.

While this was coming to a boil, Prudence took her stick, and went out to hunt for the needed herbs.

She looked a queer figure in her old kersey coat, and short yellow skirt; but her rusty, broken shoes had given place to a decent pair of moccasins, made for her by Catharine's skilful fingers.

She wore a shabby straw hat that had once been Faith's, and under it, her mob-cap—her thin, dry, dun-colored hair being drawn up on top of her head in a little knot, which she called her "peeled onion."

A cheery soul, was this valiant Yankee woman. She had proved herself a very useful servant. She was so clear-headed, as well as of such a handy, thrifty turn, that she was much thought of by her mistresses.

She had a great deal of what New Englanders call "faculty," and, when not working for Mary and Catharine, was often in demand in the tribe to make shirts and caps for the young Wyandots. She also knitted stockings for some of the squaws who could afford to pay for it; and cut out aprons for them like the gay calico one she had worn when captured on Swan Island.

For these, and other little jobs, she received a few shillings, which Mary allowed her to keep for her own. She was glad to use them, at

times, in buying from the hunters, fruits, fish, and small dead birds, to tempt the appetite of poor young Hope who was delicate, and more dainty in her tastes than Faith.

Prudence had pushed her way somewhat into the thick of the forest, before she came upon what she needed.

She sang, as she went, a shrill, high snatch of an old Puritan hymn.

She was stooping, at last, over a bed of wild mustard, filling her apron with its dried, pungent leaves and pods, and looking the while, less like a Christian woman gathering healing herbs than a witch culling simples for an incantation, when a sweet low voice, at her elbow, questioned her in French :

"Can you show us the way to the blockhouse of the French traders?"

"Hey?" grunted Prudence, who only understood a few words of the language: "can't you say it as well in English?"

"Yes, my good woman," was the reply in English, in the same sweet voice; and turning, Prudence looked upon a most unusual sight.

One of the loveliest ladies she had ever beheld stood there before her in the dim forest; and at her side, was another woman, evidently a serving-maid.

The lady was richly dressed in black velvet

and sables—a hood of mink-skin softly framing, and admirably setting off her fair and brilliant complexion.

Her eyes were large, and of a velvety blackness; and a few stray ringlets of red-gold hair curled upon her broad, white brow.

The pathetic smile upon her sweet mouth was like moonlight on a rose. In spite, however, of the elegance of her appearance, something in the lady's face, something in its coloring, and in that certain sadness of expression, brought back to Prudence a memory of her lost mistress—of Lot Leslie's comely wife.

It was a great joy to the poor Yankee woman to hear her own tongue once more from so lovely a mouth.

The third woman seemed to have no knowledge of English, for she looked mutely and questioningly at her companions, as they talked, watching closely the motion of their lips. She was dark-skinned, and had a quiet, sensible face. She wore a long cloak of russet cloth, (its hood being drawn over her head), and carried a good-sized travelling-bag.

"Whence come ye both?" asked Prudence, surprise and curiosity making her forget all else.

"From the camp of the Pottawattamies, across the river," replied the lady. "My husband and I had business with the tribe." (She sighed

heavily as she spoke.) "We stopped there for a day. This morning, one of their Indians rowed us over in his canoe. He was a lazy, tricksome fellow. Instead of landing us, as we had charged him, at the village of the Wyandots, he debarked us in these woods, under pretence that his boat was leaking; and then made his way back without us, heedless of our pitiful outcries."

"When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee," muttered Prudence in her Scriptural fashion.

The lady stared at her, as at one whose wits are astray; but, seeing that the strange woman listened to her, nevertheless, with, seemingly, the keenest interest, she went on with her narrative. "We have wandered all day in the forest, seeking a way out. We were bound for the block-house, hereabouts; but the wood is so thick, we quite despaired of reaching it. Some hours ago, my husband left us sitting on the trunk of a fallen tree. I was too exhausted to go further. He proposed to follow the river road to the open, telling me he would soon return to fetch us out. *He has never returned!* . . . We grew afraid, after awhile, of those lonely wilds, with their chances of prowling beasts or savages. We arose, and proceeded along the path whereby my husband had disappeared. We had not walked

far, before we heard, thanks to God! a woman's voice singing in the distance. It was a joyful sound. We followed it quickly, and it led us on to you, my good woman, culling simples, here, at the edge of the forest."

"Thus saith the Lord," quoted Prudence, taking kindly in her own the gloved hand of the lady: "'refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy!'"

"Heaven grant it! heaven speedily grant it!" cried the stranger, fervently, as she clasped her hands, and raised her tearful eyes to the blue above them, in a burst of almost wild emotion: "Good woman, you know not all the hope, all the blessed promise, your words would give me. But my husband—? Think you, he has safely reached the blockhouse? Show us but the way, and my maid and I will go thither at once."

"Come with me, mistress," said the cheery Yankee woman: "the road you seek is close at hand. Were it not that old Whitewash-Brush is deadly sick at home, I'd go with you myself, every step of the way."

"May our dear Lord reward your kindness!" returned the sweet lady, gratefully, adding: "You live, then, good woman, among the Wyandots?"

"'Woe is me that my banishment is prolonged!'" quoted Prudence from king David: "I am, indeed, a prisoner and a slave among the savages. 'Turn our captivity, O Lord, as a torrent in the south!' But, here is your road to the blockhouse,"—she concluded, with one of those sudden changes from the sublime to the commonplace, which the lady found so extraordinary, and almost laughable.

There was no sign of a smile on her face, however, as she turned back to clutch the Yankee woman's wrist, whispering eagerly and hoarsely: "Are there any captive children among the Wyandots?—any pretty little white girls in your village, good woman?"

"What's that to you?" questioned Prudence, cautiously; then, seeing the shadow of disappointment that fell over the lovely face before her, she melted enough to add:

"Well, I'll not dispute but what there's a couple of mighty nice little white gals in the lodge of Mary Tarbuki!"

The lady turned irresolutely, as if to follow Prudence at once to her dwelling-place; but the other dark, quiet woman laid a detaining hand on her arm, murmuring something in French, as she pointed down the road to the blockhouse.

The lady yielded to her maid's advice, whatever it might have been; but, seemingly with an

effort. She cast a backward, pleading glance at Prudence, who watched with interest the two strangers hurry through the path toward the lake, until they disappeared around a turn of the road.

"She's got something on her mind, and no mistake, poor, pretty lady! and that yellow-skinn'd *demmyzell* knows her secret, and's got the upper hand of her!" muttered the Yankee woman to herself, as she pushed her way home to Mary's lodge.

The curtain of skins was thrust aside at the moment she reached it, and little Hope Leslie ran out to welcome her.

She had news to tell her, as well.

The blind grandmother had taken such a dreadful turn towards noon, that Catharine had been sent to fetch the priest from the Huron Mission.

Pierre Meloche happened to be fishing that morning, off the river-bank: so he had offered to take Catharine across in his boat. They were to bring the priest back with them at once.

Miss Skillet's heavy brows lowered at the news. She had been bred a Puritan, and she hated a Jesuit, (although she had never seen one), as the devil is said to hate holy water. That Evil One saw that the good woman had been much moved and edified, of late, by the saintly lives of Mary and Catharine; and he now set

himself to stir up within her a great dislike and dread of the coming priest.

Recalling all the ugly stories about Papists and priestcraft, she had heard in her narrow childhood in the Massachusetts colony—long since forgotten—she went slowly into the lodge.

She found that Faith had kept up a roaring fire, over which the big water-pot was boiling merrily. She hastened to steep the herbs she had gathered: and was soon busy binding the hot poultices to the nape of the sick woman's neck, to her wrists, and the soles of her icy feet.

Before long, the fiery plasters began to draw the congested blood from the sufferer's brain, bringing back to her consciousness and imperfect speech.

Instructing her daughter to keep her well-covered with the warmest of buffalo skins, and to renew the poultices until blisters formed under them, Prudence slipped away to find Faith and Hope.

It was close to the hour when Catharine might be expected to return with the priest from the Mission; and Miss Skillet's whole heart was set upon getting her two darlings out of the way of his supposed Satanic influence.

The children were busy at the fire, boiling hominy and bear's meat in a kettle, for the noon-day meal.

Prudence quietly took their place. Bidding them eat quickly a hearty dinner, she sent them both off to the edge of the wood, to gather the dry branches and pine-cones for firing.

She had time to whisper to them before they went:

"If you chance to meet Catharine and the priest on the road, *have nothing to say to him!* Dreadful things have happened to them that had dealings with Popish priests. Oh! my dearies, I'd rather follow you to your graves, and never see you more in this world, than have you fall under the power of a Jesuit; for a Jesuit will ruin you, body and soul!"¹

Frightened by the strange look of dread and mystery that settled, with these words, on the face of their old friend and care-taker, the little girls hurried away towards the forest, and were out of sight of the lodge by the time Catharine and Father Peter entered at its door.

Prudence stared at the priest with keen interest and curiosity, in spite of her repugnance to his cloth.

"This is our slave, *mon père*,— *Wahsca Amisk*," said Catharine, waving her hand toward the white woman, and calling her by her Indian title,

¹ The actual words of a New England captive among the Indians to her son, when he told her that a Jesuit priest had offered to buy him from the savages.

"White Beaver,"—a name, well-earned by the Yankee servant's untiring industry.

Prudence, compelled by the dignity of the Jesuit's tall, slender figure, and the high-bred intelligence of his grave, gentle face—(or was it by something higher and holier?) dropped him a curtsey, as it were, against her will.

The priest took no notice of the salute, or of her who gave it. His eyelids were downcast: his lips moving rapidly in whispered prayer.

Catharine had forgotten, for the moment, that he bore with him, hidden in his bosom, the Holy of Holies, the Eucharistic God, before Whom all the earth should keep silence.

Her mother was approaching them with the blessed candle. Confused and sorrowful for her forgetfulness, (prompted even though it had been, by her zeal to bring an erring soul to the notice of the true Shepherd of the flock), the Indian girl took the freshly-lighted taper from Mary's hand, and meekly led Father Peter to the side of her dying grandmother.

The keen spiritual sense of the old squaw had already recognized the presence of her hidden Lord.

Supported against her daughter's breast, the blind woman stretched forth her arms toward the approaching priest, with an indescribable look of love and longing on her dark, wrinkled

face—a look, so full of heaven, that it brought Prudence Skillet to her knees in her distant, shady corner of the lodge, as if an angel of God had smitten her down with his sword of fire.

Those eyeless sockets, uplifted, seemed to gaze upon some Object (unseen to all, save them)—some Person or Thing so beautiful, so brilliant, that the mystic radiance of its beauty overflowed upon the old squaw's dusky, homely face, and transfigured it with light and loveliness.

Well might poor old Anne *Why-washi-brooch* thus wear the likeness of a seraph, adoring God in His unveiled glory!

Hers was a soul of singular holiness and purity. The clean of heart are ever blessed in seeing God; and she had served Him fifty years from her conversion, without soiling by serious sin the white robe of her baptism.

Her very blindness was a proof of her martyr-like fidelity to her faith; for her fierce Mohawk mother, a very Jezabel of aborigines, learning in the early days of the Missions, that her young daughter listened more readily to the teachings of the Black Robe than to the threats of the medicine-man of the tribe, plucked out her eyes with her own strong and cruel claws, and flung them to the dogs of the lodge.

“Now, find your way, if you can, to the Black

Robe, and the camp of his Manitou!" shrieked the unnatural fury to her victim.

But, exceedingly great and sweet was the reward of the young confessor.

Into the dreadful darkness that fell, that hour, upon her bodily sight, there came a wonderful Light, that never afterwards wavered or vanished.

She needed not, henceforth, the brightness of sun, or moon, or star. She missed not the light of torch or camp-fire; for the glory of the living God enlightened her soul: and night could be no more for her, who walked ever in the unearthly splendors of the Lamb.

It was said of her in the tribe: "*Why-washi-brooch* sees, day and night, the God of the Black Robe!"—and her very mother grew afraid, in time, of that strange, steady radiance that seemed to shine constantly from out her daughter's meek, sightless face.

She was glad when the Christian chief of the Wyandots asked her for his bride. She rejoiced when he carried her off to his lodge on the banks of the Detroit.

Ho-a-is-ene, as the chief was called, had been directed in a dream to the "Blind Lily of the Mohawks,"—a shining figure, all in white, appearing to him in sleep, and telling him that if he could but win the gentle Anne for his wife,

joy, peace, and plenty would dwell forever more in his lonely lodge.

She had proved to him, indeed, a sweet and faithful spouse—filling his life with countless blessings, and bearing him many children of whom Mary, (or *Omi-Mee*) was the last survivor.

And now, she was making ready to join him in that Better Land, to which *Ho-a-is-ens* had journeyed alone, full of the peace of God, ten years before.

At a sign from Father Peter, Mary Tarbuki arose from her knees, her lovely face wet with tears, and quietly motioned Catharine and Prudence to follow her out from the lodge.

The priest was left alone with the dying woman; but they had not long to wait before the Jesuit summoned them to return.

The old squaw's peace with God had been made at her girlhood's baptism, half a century gone—nevermore to be broken upon earth.

Prudence Skillet had not intended to go back to the lodge while the priest remained in it; but such a burning desire possessed her, unaccountably, to look again upon that wonderful light and beauty shining from the sick woman's face, that she felt forced to return to her with Mary and Catharine.

She felt incensed at herself for her weakness, as she knelt down in that dim corner, where the

blind woman had been wont to sit constantly in her days of health. "This," she thought in her heart, "this must be part of the spell of their Popish priestcraft. It's rank sorcery. I'm main glad I sent the children away to the forest!"

A low murmur in an unknown tongue drew her attention towards the rough couch of the dying woman.

Beside it, knelt Father Peter holding up before Anne's sightless eyes, a small white Wafer, the sight of which made the flesh of Prudence Skillet creep with an overwhelming sense of awe and mystery. All the more, because she saw that Mary and Catharine adored It, prostrate on the ground, with their faces pressed to the earthen floor.

Two texts from her favorite Scriptures came into her mind as she watched them—one from the Lamentations of Jeremias: "He shall put his mouth in the dust, if so there may be hope"; the other, from Daniel when that prophet saw, in vision, the Angel of God, and heard from his lips the revelation of the Lord: "I heard the voice of his words, and when I heard, I lay in consternation upon my face, and my face was close to the ground."

But oh! the shining rapture on the brow of the aged squaw, when the priest laid the little snowy Wafer upon her trembling tongue!

As if dazzled by a heavenly light, the white slave in the corner held her hands before her eyes, from which a flood of tears was pouring, and sobbed softly to herself with a sort of strange, wondering envy.

What was that little white Object, that called forth from these poor Indians such an excess of profound worship, such an ecstasy of glad adoration?

The Yankee woman found it impossible to answer this question.

When she took courage again to look at the sick woman, the last anointing had begun. Prudence watched the priest, praying, touch with holy oil, the eyes and ears, mouth and nostrils, hands and feet of the old squaw; but she was wholly unprepared for the startling circuit of stance that followed.

Father Peter had not yet put back the oil-stocks into their case, and Mary Tarbuki was just about to re-cover with the fur robes the naked feet of *Why-washi-brooch*, when the dying woman sprang up from her couch, and stood erect before them all.

With face and arms upraised to heaven, in a gesture of unconscious tragedy, she cried aloud in the Indian tongue:

"I am cured! I am cured! The Lord my God hath delivered me, in His mercy, from the

shadow of death, and the chill darkness of the grave!"

"Give thanks to the Almighty Physician, my dear children!" said the trembling voice of the priest, as he fell upon his knees, with the three Indian women: "Give thanks, with all your hearts, for the wonder God hath wrought. It is written: 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up.'"

Whilst he began to recite the *Te Deum*, softly, yet with deepest feeling, Prudence Skillet, half-suffocated by the strange choking at her throat, rushed for the door of the lodge.

She felt she must reach the open air, or smother on the spot.

Her brain was dazed, stunned, by all she had seen and heard. What awful Power was this that could raise even the dying to life and health?

As she thrust aside the curtain at the door, she ran against Faith and Hope Leslie, returning to the lodge with their bundles of firewood.

Behind them, pressed forward two other female figures.

Prudence knew them, at a glance, as the strange women she had met that morning in the forest.

The beautiful lady was deadly pale in her black velvet and sables. She caught wildly at

Prudence, exclaiming in something between a sob and a scream :

"My husband has not returned! He must be lost in the forest! What shall I do, good woman, what shall I do? Where shall I turn for help?"

The face of the Yankee woman blazed with a fire that was almost that of insanity. She was indeed full of that madness which comes to people of narrow experience when they look, for the first time, upon the startling wonders of divine power and mercy.

She seized the strange lady by the shoulders, and pushed her vehemently towards the door of the lodge, crying out with passionate energy :

"In, with you, my lady! in, with you, and look upon the dead who have come, this day, to life! 'The bitterness of death is passed.' 'Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul? And why dost thou disquiet me?' Where should you turn for help but to the Man in there, the Black Robe, who worketh miracles—who healeth the sick with a touch?"

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CHAPTER XI.

THE FACE AT THE WINDOW.

TIMOTHY GRINDSTONE had found the Mission-store of the Jesuits a very entertaining place.

Leaving little Willy quite happy and at home with Father Armand, in the big easy-chair beside the fire, the brave Swan Islander made his way, alone, after dinner, to the workshop of Brother La Tour, and offered to help Brother Regis at the counters.

It was an idle hour, when there was little to be done. Few of the traders or hunters had yet come in from their noonday meal; and when Timothy had finished the little chores Brother Regis had laid out for him, he found himself resting on a bale of blankets beside the Englishman, Alexander, whose fascinating talk had so pleased and interested him, that morning.

"It does me good," said he in a low voice: "to meet one of my own kind, and hear the music of an English voice. I'm sick of the jabbering of these rascally redskins; and the French lingo of the others drives me wild!"

"Have a care," whispered Alexander: "these

are dangerous words. I, myself, am only here on sufferance. If it weren't for the priests, these Indians would soon make short work of us both. Yet, with all its risks and hardships, I like the wild life of the forest. It must be the blood of my Indian forefathers stirring in my veins."

"Your 'Indian forefathers'?" echoed Grindstone, in dismay. "Aren't you, then, an Englishman of Englishmen, born and bred?"

"For many generations—yes," returned his companion, striking his pocket-flint for a light for his pipe: "but, more than two hundred years ago, a young Florida squaw, Wacissa, was wedded to my ancestor, Juan Ortiz. Worse and worse, you think of it, eh?" (he added with a pleasant laugh): "Spanish on one side, Seminole on the other—a queer mixture it is, and a strange story, my man. Would you care to hear it?"

"That, would I," returned Timothy, heartily: "and many thanks to you, comrade, for the telling. We can be quite free in our talk, I take it, seeing that no one about here understands English but our two selves."

"Don't be too sure of that," cautioned Alexander, with a wary glance around him. "But it's not much for others to know, even if they chance to overhear me, that, in the year of our Lord, 1528, Pamphilo de Narvaez of the isle of Cuba was made Governor of Florida, or (as his

commission stated it), 'of all the lands lying from the River of Palms to the Cape of Florida.' He sailed for his new domain, that year, with four hundred foot soldiers and twenty horse, in five stout ships.

"This de Narvaez had previously made some name for himself by having engaged the famous Cortez, at the order of the Governor of Cuba. But the destroyer of Mexico overthrew him, and took him prisoner. Whereupon, the hot-headed and arrogant fellow cried out to Cortez: 'Esteem it good fortune that you have taken *me* captive!' To which, the victor replied: 'Nay, then, it is the least of the things I have done in Mexico!'

"Well, it was in the month of April that de Narvaez landed in Florida, somewhere about Apalachee bay. He marched with his men into the country, seizing on the natives, as they went, and forcing them to act as guides. They had their heads full of dreams of splendid cities, and of towns full of gems, or of gold and silver treasure. They were terribly disappointed when they reached the first village (of Apalachee) to find it a miserable little settlement of some forty Indian wigwams. The natives, by degrees, got to understand that this insolent Spaniard and his people were merely treasure-hunting upon their grounds, for gold and emeralds; so they guyed them about from one village to another, always

promising that rich 'finds' awaited them at their next remove.

"De Narvaez and his men were thus led a pretty dance over some eight hundred miles of country, losing soldiers and provisions at every turn. Coming out, at last, upon the coast, they found themselves in such wretched plight, that they set about making some cockle shells of boats, in which none but the most desperate of creatures would venture to embark. In these, they coasted toward New Spain. But, alas! when they neared the mouth of the Mississippi, they were cast away in a storm, and all perished save fifteen, only four of whom lived to reach Mexico, and that, after eight years of wandering and hardships, almost past believing.

"The wife of de Narvaez hearing, the next year, in Cuba, the unhappy end of her husband's expedition, fitted out a small company of some score and a half of men, and sent them forth in a brigantine to search for the Governor and his soldiers. With this company, went Juan Ortiz, my ancestor, a native of Seville, and a gentleman highly connected with the Castilian nobility.

"Reaching, in due time, the coast of Florida, the newcomers, in their inexperience, eagerly sought to communicate with the natives. The natives, on their part, seemed just as eager to give them a chance. For, as the Spaniards drew

near to the shore, in their boat, three or four Indians ran down upon the beach, and setting up a stick on the sands, placed in a cleft at its top, what looked to be a letter. Then, they withdrew a few paces, and made signs for the Spaniards to come and take it.

"It is a snare to capture us!" cried the captain of the brigantine; and all aboard agreed with him in his suspicions, save Juan Ortiz, and his body-servant, Manuel Gomez.

"It is a letter from his Excellency, Governor de Narvaez," urged the gentleman from Seville. "It may tell us all we want to know about him and his lost company. Gomez and I will go and fetch it. Come, Manuel, let us wade at once to the shore!" And, in spite of the loud protests of the ship's company, Ortiz and his servant pushed through the clear, green shallows to the spot on the sand, where the supposed letter was fluttering in the wind.

"No sooner had they touched the beach, than the Indians swarmed out, like magic, from every side, till a multitude surrounded the two Spaniards, and laid hold of them. Gomez foolishly showed fight, and was instantly killed by a tomahawk in the hands of a chief. The rest of the natives carried off Ortiz to the nearest Indian village—his friends in the brigantine being so frightened by what they saw upon the shore, that

they put out to sea again, making no effort to rescue him.

"In the Indian village, Ortiz noticed that the houses were all made of wood, and thatched with palm leaves. The two largest were the house of the chief (or *casique*) of the tribe, which stood on a terrace, and resembled a fort; and a temple for sacrifices over the door of which was set up a curious object. This was the figure of a great bird, carved with some skill out of wood, *and having gilded eyes!* Ortiz wondered a good deal, as he looked at it, who could have been the painter that understood the art of gilding in that wild and savage quarter.

"But he was not left long to ponder the mystery. The Indians hurried him before their chief, whose name was Ucita; and who at once condemned Juan to die by fire. This was to be done as follows:

"Four savages set as many high stakes in the ground, to which they bound the captive. They fastened his arms and legs, extended, as if on a St. Andrew's cross; and, down below him, they lighted a fire, so as to make his death a slow and dreadful torture.

"The flames began to rage and roar, (fed by many cruel, eager hands), and poor Ortiz feeling their scorching breath upon his feet, believed himself already doomed. As he was a good

Papist, he prayed fervently to God and the Madonna for aid. When lo! a very strange circumstance happened.¹

"Out from the house of the chief, near by, there ran to Ucita, a young and graceful Indian girl. It was his only daughter, Wacissa. We had a picture of her—an heirloom—at our old English homestead across the seas. Juan Ortiz painted her, years later, just as she appeared, that day. Her skin was more of a golden tint than brown, with a rich carmine on cheek and lips. Her face was passing lovely, and she wore a robe of pure, white cotton that fell in straight folds to her feet. On her long, black, silky hair was a wreath of fresh, green palm-leaves; and about her rounded throat, a necklace of sparkling beads, while her beautiful arms were ringed with great bands of polished silver. Ortiz always declared when he painted the picture (for he was very skilful in colors) that, in his awful extremity that day, Wacissa looked to him like a young goddess out of a Greek poem.

"He could not understand her language, but he guessed well her meaning when, standing before Ucita, she bowed to him profoundly, and spread wide her lovely, pleading arms. Long afterward, he knew that she said to him in her rich, musical voice: 'My kind father, why kill

¹ These are actual facts, attested by a credible authority.

this poor stranger? He is but one, and alone—how, then, can he do you or our people any harm? It is better that you should keep him a prisoner. Alive, and grateful, he may, some day, prove himself of great service to you. Spare him, then, if only for my sake, great and good Ucita!

"The *casique* sat silent for a while, watching the furious flames leap higher and higher, licking, as with tongues of fire, the soles of the victim's feet. His wrists and ankles had begun to bleed from the deep gashes made by his cruel bonds. His face was livid with agony.

"Release the captive!" cried Ucita, at last, rising, and going away to his house. The Indians instantly cut down the Spaniard, and laid him fainting at Wacissa's feet. When they had brought her water and oil, she gently washed and dressed the captive's wounds; and, when he revived, ordered food and drink to be given to him. He smiled up into her beautiful face, which seemed to him, then, the face of a ministering angel; and made a feeble effort to kiss her tender hands. She blushed, but did not show any signs of displeasure.

"In a few days, Ortiz was well enough to be allotted his special work in the tribe. Strange and dreadful work it was, and very revolting to a high-born Spaniard of delicate tastes. Death

would almost have been easier. He was stationed as sentinel at the door of the village-temple, and set to guard it against all intruders, especially wild beasts. Being a place of sacrifice, it was the nightly resort of wolves, seeking for carrion. The rude altar in the centre of the great gloomy hall was dyed red with human blood; the floor was thickly strewn with a ghastly array of skulls and bloody bones, in various loathsome stages of decay.

"The sight of these, and their awful stench filled poor Ortiz with a shuddering sickness. He could not help fancying that the remains of the unfortunate de Narvaez and his men might be among the horrors that reeked under the gilded eyes of the great carved bird. The place seemed peopled, nightly, with the ghosts of the missing Spaniards; and a fearful midnight adventure, which happened, at this time, almost upset his reason."

Here, the Englishman stopped to relight his pipe, which had gone out; and the storehouse cat, Brother Fine-Ear by name, came, and rubbed his sides against Timothy's foot.

It was an enormous creature, smooth, round, and glossy as a black, satin cushion.

From the top of his broad head to the tip of his sinuous tail, not a spot of color was to be seen about him, except his great green eyes, which

now fixed themselves steadily on Grindstone's face.

He patted his knee encouragingly, and Brother Fine-Ear sprang up upon it, and curled himself down under the stroke of the friendly hand, purring loudly, as he tucked in his velvet paws, and settled to a blinking nap.

"Late, one night," said Alexander, going on with his story: "Juan Ortiz awoke to find the temple a den of howling wolves. At sunset, that day, the dead body of a young Indian had been brought in, and laid upon the altar of sacrifice. It was the son of a great chief, and many charges had been given the sentinel to guard it well. But the wolves had scented out their prey.

"Waking in a sore fright, Juan seized a heavy cudgel, (which he always kept by him when he slept), and laid about him in the dense darkness of the temple, driving out the filthy beasts. He knew not that the foremost, as it ran, dragged with it the corpse of the young Indian; but, having pursued the pack for some distance, he chanced to smite one of the wolves, at random, a mortal blow. It was not until his return to the temple, at daybreak, that he discovered, to his deep distress, the loss of the young Indian's body.

"The affair made a great stir in the village; and Ucita, full of rage, resolved to put the

unlucky Spaniard to death. First, however, he sent out several Indians to recover, if possible, the lost sacrifice from the wolves. He had not credited the sentinel's version of his midnight encounter; but, astonishing to relate, the young man's corpse was found by the scouts, and near it, the body of the huge wolf that Ortiz had unconsciously slain in the darkness.

"This saved the life of the Spaniard: and for several more years, he watched at the door of the temple of sacrifice, keeping guard over the unholy dead, under the outspread wings of the great, golden-eyed bird. At last, Ucita decided to sacrifice the sentinel, in order to win the favor of his gods upon a war he had begun to wage with a neighboring *casique*, Mocoso.

"But, again, Wacissa came to the Spaniard's rescue. At dead of night, she led him secretly out of her father's village, and brought him safely to the camp of Mocoso. That chief seems to have been a broad-minded man, according to his natural lights, and of great kindness of heart. He welcomed the daughter of his rival; and Ortiz, finding to his surprise and delight, that a priest, Dom Angelo, the former chaplain of the *de Narvaez* fleet, was also a captive of Mocoso's, engaged him at once to marry him to Wacissa."

A little interruption here took place in the trader's story—Brother Regis calling on Timothy

to light the lamps around the walls of the storehouse, where the twilight shadows had already begun to darken.

When he had resumed his seat beside the Englishman, with Brother Fire-Ear again on his knee, Alexander continued:

"For many years, Juan Ortiz and his Indian wife led a peaceful, happy life in their southern home. Mocoso grew so fond of the Spaniard, who was a good and wise man, that he chose him for his favorite counsellor, and treated him and Wacissa, as well as the priest, more like honored guests than prisoners and slaves.

"Ortiz, as our family legends tell us, 'spent his time wandering with his gentle, beautiful wife over the delightful savannahs of Florida, through the mazes of the palmetto, or beneath the refreshing shades of the fragrant magnolia—pursuing the deer in the grey of the early morning, and the scaly fry in the silver lakes, at the cool of the evening.' Theirs was the ideal life of Adam and Eve in an earthly Paradise."

"Among their many children (who, with their sweet mother, were all made Christians by the good Dom Angelo), one daughter, Ysabella, was destined for a different fate to that of her brothers and sisters. A young English sailor was shipwrecked on the Florida coast, and, after clinging to a broken mast for a night and a day, was

rescued by Ysabella in her little canoe. The life that she saved was devoted, from that hour, to its beautiful deliverer. Henry Alexander, (for the young man was my great-grandfather), wooed and won this gentle daughter of Juan and Wacissa Ortiz; and, later on, carried her back to England, where he fell heir to a considerable estate.

"One of his grandsons eventually emigrated to Canada, and from that branch of our family, came the Belleperches whose descendants are now settled here, on the bank of the Detroit. It was the son of my cousin Belleperche, who gave us this morning, in this very storehouse, the pleasing rhyme on the origin of the races. He is a clever youth, and a fine declaimer. I have been staying with his father for some days, but to-night, I start once more upon the road. What I said to you, Grindstone, at our first talk, I repeat to you, this evening: Will you come with me to Lake George? Will you try your luck on a trading-trip to Fort William Henry?"

At this juncture, the great cat on Timothy's knee began to spit, and rose up, ruffling its inky fur, and arching its glossy back.

Its big green eyes glared at one of the store windows, blazing, like a pair of fiery emeralds.

Timothy followed its gaze: and what he saw there made his heart stand still, and the blood freeze in his veins.

A huge Indian stood outside the window, peering into the store. He held his blanket arched over his head, so that he might the better see into the lighted room; but Timothy distinctly saw his face. A near-by lamp shone full upon it.

He recognized the man as a Caughnewaga chief, one of the craftiest and most cruel of his old masters.

They had, then, tracked him to his present refuge!

The cold sweat started out over him, at the thought of being retaken, and dragged back into captivity.

He lifted the great cat, and held it before his face, to hide it, if possible, from the Indian; but he could not hide it from Alexander, who was seated with his back to the fatal window.

"What ails you, man?" growled the Englishman, alarmed at his companion's deadly whiteness. "Have you seen a ghost?"

"I have seen an enemy!" muttered Timothy, shrinking into the shadow of some boxes, and setting Fine-Ear on his feet. "Say no more," he added, gripping Alexander's hand as in a vise: "I am your man. I'll go with you to-night; but you must help me disguise myself for the journey. There are cruel spies upon my track."

"Leave all that to me," returned Alexander,

encouragingly ; then, as a middle-aged Canadian entered the store, followed by a party of Indians : "Here is my cousin, Belleperche, with some of his friendly Hurons. They'll see you safe to the Mission house. Make ready, there, for the road ; and I'll call for you in an hour or two."

Timothy went back, through the moonlight, to Father Armand in such a state of anxious perplexity, that he scarcely noticed his kindly body-guard, or thought of looking about for the big Caughnewaga. He would have been easier in his mind if he had known that the huge fellow lay, that moment, on the ground, under the store-house window, with Red Snake's knife glittering in his lifeless breast.

Having pledged his word to the Englishman, Timothy was now sorely distressed at the prospect of parting from little Willy. The presence of the Caughnewaga was a menace to the boy, as well as to himself. Why couldn't he take Willy with him to Lake George ?

But the Father Superior soon dashed that feeble hope. Willy, (he said), was not so well as he had been, that morning. He had grown feverish during the afternoon. The child was far too weak for a long, rough journey. Father Armand had already sent him to bed.

Was he asleep ? The priest thought not. Timothy, then, making his way into the moon-

lighted infirmary, had a long talk with the lad, sitting on the side of his little cot.

By the time Alexander arrived, that night, at the Mission house, Timothy had had his supper, and had arranged that Willy should remain with Father Armand during his friend's absence. It was also agreed, that the boy should see no strangers, but spend his time constantly under the Superior's eye, studying, and improving himself.

The little fellow, seeing that Grindstone seemed uneasy, promised him in a whisper that he would let no one make a Papist of him while he was gone.

When all these little matters were finally settled, Timothy asked for Father Peter. He wanted to say farewell to him, and thank him for his kind attentions.

He was surprised to learn from the Superior, that his brother-priest had not returned—would not return that night, from the Wyandot village.

One of their Montreal factors, Louis St. Ange, with his wife and her maid, had been lost during the day in the forest by the river, (said Father Armand). The ladies had made their way with much difficulty to the blockhouse; but Catharine Tarbuki had brought word, at sunset, that Father Peter and a party of Indians were still scouring the woods for the lost merchant.

When questioned further, Catharine had said that the St. Anges had been traveling among the tribes, for months, searching for a stolen child. Father Peter hoped to bring them to the Assumption Mission, the following day.

"You won't forget your promise, sir—to keep Willy away from the eyes of all strangers?" said Timothy, as he grasped tightly the Superior's hand.

And, while the good priest renewed his assurances that he would guard faithfully his precious trust, Alexander opened his pack, and took from it a wig and beard of long white hair and a bundle of picturesque clothing.

The first, Timothy fitted over his ugly scalplock; the second, he fastened securely around his jaws; and when he had changed his Indian dress for one of the Englishman's Canadian disguises, he stood forth ready for his journey, the impersonation of a hardy, respectable old French trader.

"If the redskins scalp me now," said he, with a grim smile, as he parted from Father Armand, "they'll not have much trouble ripping off my hair!"

"And no danger of a sore head after the operation, either!" added Alexander, with a laugh.

Could he have foreseen the future,—could he have torn away the veil from the dark and

bloody doom then shambling hideously toward him,—that laugh would have changed into a shriek of horror, strong enough to have shaken the very stars of heaven.

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CHAPTER XII.

A FATAL GAME OF BALL.

THE English trader's first plan had been to travel down to Pennsylvania, and visit Fort Gripsholm on the Schuylkill River, near the site of what is now known as Gray's Ferry.

It was a Swedish station—then, surrounded by a great forest; and near by, was the Strong-house, built by the Swedes for a trafficking place with the Delawares, and other Indian tribes, who thither brought their furs for exchange.

But the news of the British victory at Lake George had changed Alexander's plans. He, consequently, made his way with his companion through the Great Lakes, and across the northern part of New York.

Here, he struck the waters which mingle with those of Lake Champlain, and which were first christened by the sainted martyr, Father Isaac Jogues—the Lake of the Holy Sacrament, because he came upon them on the eve of Corpus Christi. The name of the English king afterwards blotted out the lake's early and sacred title; and when Timothy Grindstone first looked

upon it, trailing its thirty miles of clear, tranquil water between long ranges of lofty mountains, it was known only as Lake George.

At its southern point, stood Fort William Henry. On their way thither, Alexander and Timothy stopped at one of its outposts, where General Johnson had encamped some of his men.

These were so elated by the victory of the previous June, that they had grown careless and self-confident, somewhat relaxing their vigilance against the neighboring French and Indians.

Alexander was surprised to learn from the commanding officer, Captain Gorell, that, the day following the trader's arrival at the post, the Indians were to entertain the garrison with a game of *Baggatiway*.

"What is '*Baggatiway*'?" asked Timothy of his friend, the next day, when they were alone in an upper room of the fort.

"Have you never seen it played?" said Alexander. "It's an Indian game of ball, and a very exciting one, I can assure you. Aren't you coming down to watch it?"

"Not I," replied Timothy, as he arranged upon a small table some sheets of paper, an ink-horn, and a quill pen one of the officers had given him. "I'm going to write a letter to Willy. A canoe will leave here at noon; and I'm glad of a chance to send a few lines. The lad's a poor scholar, to

be sure: but Father Armand will kindly read him the letter from his absent Tim."

"That old priest seems to be a goodish sort of a man," said the Englishman, thoughtfully, "I think you said he gave you a safe-conduct letter?"

"Yes, I have it snugly here," and Grindstone tapped his breast-pocket.

"Hold fast to it," said Alexander, decidedly. "It may prove of great service, if we get into a tight place at any time, with these French or redskins. Now, I'll run down to the mess-room," he added, "and find out when *Baggatiway* is going to begin."

Timothy had only written a page or two—for he was but a clumsy penman, writing with great labor, squaring his elbow as he did so, his face close to the paper, and constantly putting out his tongue—when the Englishman returned.

He was looking very red in the face, and kept mopping the sweat from his brow with a big yellow handkerchief.

A large, florid man, was Henry Alexander, who always felt the heat very much.

"A deuced hot morning, Grindstone!" he cried. "By Jove! I'm going to take a dip in the lake. Game won't begin for a while yet. I'll have time enough for my bath before the posts are set."

"Success to you!" said Timothy, good-naturedly, as he rubbed his quill across his sleeve by way of a pen-wiper.

"Best leave these here with you," pursued Alexander, taking out his purse, and drawing from his fob a big, old-fashioned silver watch.

He laid both on the table beside his friend—then, moved toward the door.

Some other and more serious thought seemed suddenly to strike him. He turned with a grave look on his broad, rosy face:

"These are queer, troublous times, Grindstone," said he, drawing a step nearer to his friend. "When a man goes out of his door, he knows not if he will ever come back."

He passed his hand perplexedly across his brow, which was covered with beads of perspiration.

"I don't know what has come over me," he added, slowly; "but, remember this: If anything sudden happens to me, comrade, the watch and purse are yours."

Walking, with a curious hesitancy, to the door, he wheeled about again on the threshold to say:

"You'll find in yonder pack the safe-conduct letters my cousin Belleperche gave me at parting. There's a bit of wampum, there, too—studded with bear's teeth. I got it from the chief Pontiac. Both might be useful in an emergency."

And he was gone.

"Heaven save us!" muttered Timothy, as the door closed after him. "The heat's been too much for him. He needs blood-letting or leeches. 'Tain't like him to be so low in spirits."

He picked up his quill, and returned to his hard task of telling Willy on paper (it would have been so easy, face to face!) all the news of his journey across the lakes, and the success of his trading-trip with the Englishman.

But, try as he would, he could not fix his thoughts upon his letter. His friend's unusual mood, his parting words of counsel, had made him so uneasy, that, at last, he pushed aside his pen and ink, and crossed over to a window which gave upon the ground in front of the fort. To his surprise, he saw that the game of *Baggatiway* was just about to begin.

In the wide field below him, he beheld two posts set up about a half-mile apart.

A great ball had been thrown into the central space between them; and, at each post, were gathered about one hundred Indians, all armed with bats, or curved sticks, with a sort of racket at their ends.

The game consisted in so hitting the ball with the bat, as to drive it up against one or other of the opposing posts.

A wild sight, it was, to witness—some two

hundred great, brown, naked creatures, leaping and racing over the field, their long black hair flying behind them in the wind.

Now, they struggled together in a dense mass on the ground, like players in a modern game of football. Again, they rushed shouting about, striking madly with their bats, tripping up their opponents, and tossing them around, like so many rag-dolls.

And, all the while, the gates of the fort stood wide open.

The English soldiers lounged outside in the sunshine, or perched on the pickets of the palisade, watching the game with merry interest. Quite off their guard, they laughed and chatted with a great crowd of Canadians who had gathered to see the play.

Some of the British officers—handsome, dashing fellows in brilliant uniforms of scarlet velvet and gold lace—stood at the gates, exchanging bets on the odds of the game.¹

It was a beautiful, warm day in the Indian summer; and Timothy wondered, as he gazed, that the groups of squaws who squatted before the palisades, could wear, as they did, their heavy blankets wrapped closely about them.

¹ Many of the incidents of this chapter actually occurred in one of the colonies, eight years later than the date of our story.

It was not very long before he knew the reason why.

He looked sharply about for Alexander, but could see nothing of him. And, after a while, tiring of the uproar, and of the struggling, brutal horse-play of those hideous, naked savages (whom he detested), he went back to his table, and resumed his writing.

Not more than fifteen minutes later, a loud Indian war-cry rose suddenly upon the air, followed by a horrid noise and confusion in the court below.

Timothy sprang to the window.

His blood curdled in his veins as he looked.

He saw, at once, the dreadful plot that lay beneath the (sometime) merry game of *Baggat-inay*.

The Indians had purposely batted the ball into the grounds of the fort; and then, making a feint of the grand rush to secure it again, had swarmed inside the gates!

As they ran, shrieking their hideous war-whoop, they snatched from the squaws at the palisades, the hatchets they had been hiding under their blankets during the game, and cut down the English soldiers, right and left.

Presently, Timothy saw Alexander in a deadly struggle, at the gate, with a powerful savage, armed to the teeth.

He turned sick with horror, as he saw his friend, (quickly worsted in the encounter), drop gashed and bleeding under the fiendish strokes of the other's tomahawk.

When he heard the dreadful scalp-yell, he looked wildly about the room for some weapon of defence.

In a corner, a fowling-piece leaned against the wall.

He seized it, and found it loaded with swan-shot.

Holding it fast, he listened intently for the tap of the drum, calling the men of the post to arms.

Alas! the garrison, surprised and overwhelmed, made no show of resistance. He saw Captain Gorell and his subordinate officers taken prisoners, and led away toward the woods. It was easy to guess what awaited them there!

There was no time to be lost. In a few moments, the slaughter and scalping on the ground-floor would be at an end, and the blood-thirsty savages would then swarm over the rest of the building, seeking fresh victims.

Timothy ran to a back window, looking out upon the house of a Frenchman, named Quillieriez, a foolish old fellow, who was gay as a butterfly, and vain as a peacock.

His cabin, like the fort, had two stories; and, from its upper window, facing the one at which

Timothy now stood, a stout rope for drying clothes had been stretched across, and secured to the opposite wall of the fort.

This had been done in the recent days of the French occupation; and the victors had been careless. Only that morning, one of the British officers had drawn the commandant's attention to the neglect; but the man who had been ordered to remove the rope, had been too busy with *Baggatiway* to execute his superior's order.

He had paid for his disobedience with his life. And old Quillieriez's clothes' line remained undisturbed.

Grindstone hurried to poor Alexander's pack, and took out of it, almost with tears, the safe-conduct letters, and Pontiac's strip of wampum.

Hiding these in his breast, with his dead friend's watch and purse, he snatched up another long, sharp knife from the pack, and thrust it into his belt with his own knife and pistols.

Then, he leaped to the window-sill, caught at the taut rope, like a sailor or a monkey, and swung himself across the narrow space to the open window on the other side.

As he went, he could see old Quillieriez, standing at a lower window, in his fanciful, many-colored dress and gaudy moccasins, watching the dreadful scenes in the court beyond.

All was quiet and sunny in this back region

over which Timothy travelled on his tight-rope, unseen.

He blessed the warmth of the day that had led to the opening of that garret window, as he scrambled into Quillieriez's loft, and cut loose the friendly rope with his knife. He then let down the sash, and pushed in at its top, a stout nail that he found on the sill.

He drew a long breath, that was almost a sob—and looked about him.

It was a rude attic, low-ceiled, and at that season, intensely hot. Some winged thing—a wasp or a blue-bottle fly—had sailed in from the sunny outside world, and was buzzing loudly as it beat itself dully, in impotent captivity, against the small window-pane, or the cobwebbed rafters.

The place was bare of furniture. The walls were of loose boards, and through a chink in them, Grindstone could see the awful slaughter still going on in the grounds of the post.

He saw the dead scalped and mangled; and heard the dying still groaning or shrieking, as their bodies were ripped open by their Indian butchers.

Shuddering, he watched those demons in savage shape, tear out the hearts of their victims, and actually drink their blood, which they scooped up in the hollow of their joined hands, and quaffed, with shouts of victorious rage.

It was a perfect orgie of murderous hate and revenge, worthy of hell.

In a few moments, the awful silence of complete annihilation fell upon the courtyard; and then, to Timothy's horror, he heard the Indians tramping into the room below his refuge.

Nothing but a single layer of boards shut him off from their sight!

Through a knot-hole in that crazy floor, he saw and heard all that passed beneath him.

The Indians at once asked old Quilleriez if there were any Englishmen about. (And Timothy now knew enough of their lingo to understand their questions.) The old dandy looked very wise and consequential. Part of his foolishness was a desire to impress the savages with a profound sense of his own importance. He would have them believe him as knowledgeable as Solomon himself.

"I can't say," was his pompous reply to their queries. "I don't know of any Englishmen," (which was the truth): "but you may search for yourselves, and then you'll be better satisfied."

Fancy Timothy's terror on hearing this permission!

Trembling, he glared madly about him for some possible hiding-place.

In the darkest corner of the loft, under the sloping rafters, was piled a great heap of those

basins of birch-bark which Quilleriez, Indian wife used (in common with her kind) for making maple-sugar.

Like lightning, Timothy sprang to this retreat; and, while the miserable ladder, that did duty for stairs, creaked under the weight of the coming savages, he hid himself as well as he could, among the friendly birch vessels.

He had hardly done so, before the door opened, and Quilleriez came in, with four of the biggest Indians he had ever seen. They were armed with tomahawks, and he smeared with blood from head to foot.

Timothy's heart beat so loud at the hideous sight of them, that he felt sure its throbbing alone would betray him. But his corner was so dark, and his clothing so like in color to the birch-bark that covered him, that he escaped the notice of the Indians.

It was in his favor, too, that they were all very drunk, having already swilled freely from the fort's rifled liquor-supply.

Yet, he almost despaired when they staggered several times around the loft, even tripping over some of the outlying sugar-vessels—one of them, in recovering himself, almost laying hold of Timothy's shoulder. But, after blustering about with much tipsy boasting, and a long account to Quilleriez of how many English they had killed, that

day, and how many scalps they had taken, they all reeled off downstairs, leaving Timothy half-suffocated by the stifling heat, and dripping with perspiration.

Our poor friend almost fainted from the reaction of his fright, and the great rush of gratitude to God for His mercies.

Strangely enough, as he lay there upon his face, shedding hot, silent tears (which were no disgrace to his manhood), and afraid yet to stir—all he could see before him in the darkness was the altar of the Jesuit's church at the Assumption Mission with the tapers burning redly upon it, and the venerable man in his strange garments lifting up above it the White Wafer and the Golden Cup. And he found himself saying over and over again in his heart, without knowing why he did so: "God of the Jesuit, I adore Thee! God of Father Armand, I thank Thee!"

After all was quiet downstairs, and the present peril seemingly past, Timothy crept out from his corner, feeling very much the need of food, and (still more) of drink: for it was many hours since he had breakfasted in the mess-room of the fort.

He was weak from the heat, as well, and exhausted by the great strain of the morning's fright and horror.

A feather-bed lay on the floor of the garret, stored there for the winter's use.

Timothy lay down upon it; and soon forgot the discomforts of heat, hunger, and thirst in a heavy sleep.

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CHAPTER XIII.

IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH—AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

GRINDSTONE was awakened by a loud and smart patter of rain upon the roof. As he lay, dreamily and drowsily, listening to it, he heard the water pouring in upon the floor from a break in the shingles overhead.

It had just occurred to him that he might catch this lucky downpour in one of the birch-bark bowls, and, with it, quench his now burning thirst, when he was startled by the opening of the garret door.

The dark, sullen face of a squaw that looked in upon him, gave him a fresh turn of terror.

But it proved to be the Indian wife of Quilleries.

She was, naturally, much surprised to find a strange man in her garret—dropped down, as it were, upon her, from the skies. When Timothy fell upon his knees, however, and made speaking gestures, craving mercy at her hands—she managed to make him understand that he need have no further fears—that the Indians had killed all the English, and had gone away for good. She

soon showed him, also, what had brought her up to the loft.

Hunting up some old rags from a corner, she proceeded to stop the hole in the roof, through which the rain was still pouring.

Timothy at once hastened to help her as handily as he could; and when their task was done, he let her know, in pantomime, how badly he needed food and drink.

She promised, in like fashion, to bring him both: and presently, went away downstairs.

Timothy had some fears as to her good faith; but he felt rebuked when she returned, in a short time, with a substantial mess of bread and meat on a platter, and a jug of fresh water.

When she left him alone again, Timothy fell to eating with a keen relish, and made a hearty meal, despite of his anxiety as to what might come to him at any moment.

Having dispatched all the food, and drank enough water to satisfy his thirst, he knelt down, and thanked God in simple words for having spared him thus far, beseeching Him to take care of him in the future, and direct him what to do to escape his enemies. He had never been what is called a religious man: but his life had been clean and honest; and recent events had shown him forcibly how small and weak is man in times of peril—how great, wise, and powerful, the

Providence that directs the destinies of the meanest.

Much comforted by his supper, and much strengthened by his prayer, Timothy threw himself once more on the feather-bed, and presently, fell fast asleep.

It was clear daylight, when he roused again, to hear voices disputing in the room below him. He soon made out that the Indians had returned.

They were urging Quillieriez to give up to them the old man with the long white hair and beard who had come to the post with the English trader, the night previous.

Some one (they said) had seen him, yesterday, climbing in at a window of the old Frenchman's house.

Timothy had forgotten about his wig and false beard, in that rapid rush of dreadful events.

He now snatched them from his head and face, and stuffed them under the bed.

He heard Quillieriez trying to baffle his pursuers: but his wife, in a low voice, and in French, was urging her man to give up the Yankee to them, as otherwise, they might kill her or her children, in revenge.

The husband, after brief silence, yielded to her fears. He told the savages that, if there were an Englishman hidden in his house, it was

without his knowledge, and against his wishes. To prove his good faith, he would again take them upstairs to search for him.

Timothy now felt that his hour had come.

He made no further attempt to hide himself; but, when the door of the room was flung open, and the Indians rushed in a second time, he rose up quietly from the bed, and stood before them, his arms folded on his breast, white and silent as a marble statue.

The savages were plainly much surprised, and almost overawed, to see, instead of the grey-beard they were seeking, a young, brown-haired vigorous man, with no trace of beard upon his face.

It was like one of the magical tricks of their medicine-man.

One of them, a great savage, six feet high and over, (who towered to the very rafters of the low-ceiled room) was covered from head to foot with charcoal and grease, except for two hideous white rings around his bloodshot eyes.

Timothy recognized him as the Indian who had slain Henry Alexander, that morning, at the gate.

He was forced to lower his eyes, as he saw, with a sickening thrill of horror, the bloody scalp of his dead friend, with its thick mass of yellow hair, dangling from the brute's belt.

Striding up to Grindstone, the giant seized him by the collar, and pointed at his breast a big carving-knife, stolen from the kitchen of the fort.

Timothy mutely recommended his soul to God; and met the horrid eyes of the savage with a calm, steady gaze—the simple dignity of a brave man resigned to the will of heaven.

The earnest power of his eye seemed to subdue the human brute. The hand that held the knife dropped, without harming him; and the Indian growled to his fellows:

"Take him downstairs! We'll not kill him now."

In the room below, they found old Quilleriez smoking his pipe, and conversing confidentially with a priest.

Timothy knew him to be one by his black gown and crucifix, even if his fine, serious, ascetic face had not told its own story.

At the sight of him, hope revived once more in the poor prisoner's heart. Hitherto, he had despaired of any benefit from the safe-conduct letters he carried. It had seemed useless to present them to the frenzied savages, or the time-serving Frenchman.

One of his hands was still free. From his bosom, he drew forth Father Armand's letter, and held it out to the priest with a world of entreaty in his honest eyes.

The Jesuit unfolded the paper, and read its contents, surprise and pleasure flushing his face, which broke into a beaming smile.

"You are a friend of Father Armand?" he said in excellent English: "Ah! then, you are the friend of a saint! He was my best-loved mate at college. I am now on my way to visit him."

"Take me with you, sir, for the love of heaven!" pleaded Timothy, also in English: "or these brutes will murder me!"

The savages had closed around him, and were hustling him, as he spoke, through the door to the road.

"Hold!" cried the priest in a loud, clear, commanding voice, laying his hand on the prisoner's shoulder, and bearing himself (Timothy thought) with the soldierly grace and courage of a general reproving refractory insurgents: "This man belongs to me! Go your ways; and look to it, that you stop your bloody work, and drink no more rum or whiskey to-day!"

The Indians instantly slunk away, like scolded children; and Timothy found himself safe, and alone with the Jesuit.

"How shall I call you, sir," he said with deep emotion: "that I may thank you for your goodness?"

"I am known as Father Eugene," returned the priest, smiling: "and, on my word, you have

just had a close reckoning with death. There's no time to be lost, even yet. These fellows are very unreliable in their moods. They may be back again, in the space of ten minutes, raging for your blood. I have a boat out yonder on the lake, and a trusty man to row us."

"Let us, then, be off at once, sir!" urged Timothy, moving towards the open door.

"Best go by way of the cellar," suggested old Quilleriez, who had just returned to the room, after a brief absence.

"Good!" cried the priest, with a nod at the Frenchman: "twill be safer than the road, and may prevent unpleasant encounters. Follow me, Master Grindstone."

And Timothy, with a grateful heart, was soon tracking Father Eugene down a rough ladder to the cellar. There, they struck an underground passage that led to the shore of the lake—now completely deserted by the Indians and their allies.

Once in the boat awaiting them there, (with a stout young Canadian to row them), the priest told Timothy that Father Armand was lying very ill at the Assumption Mission.

He had had a letter from Father Peter, telling of a fresh stroke of paralysis. As the communication was now several weeks old, he knew not if the Superior were living or dead.



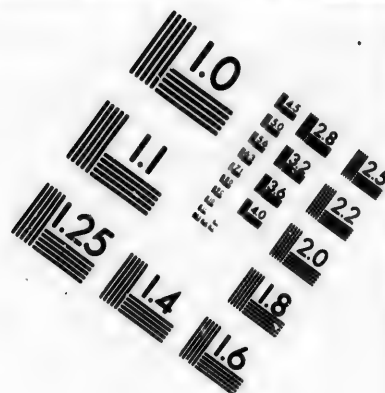
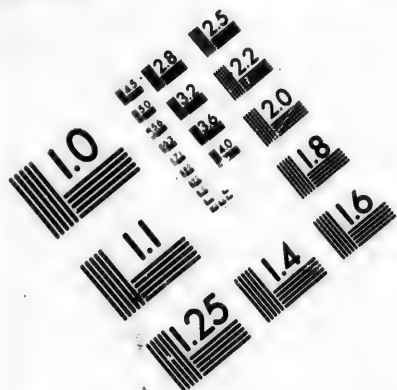
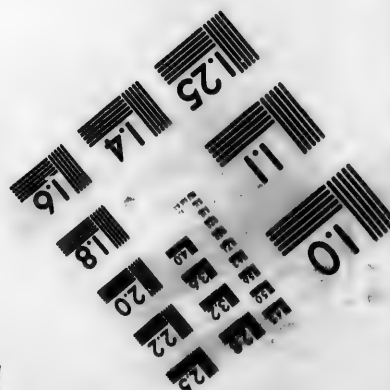
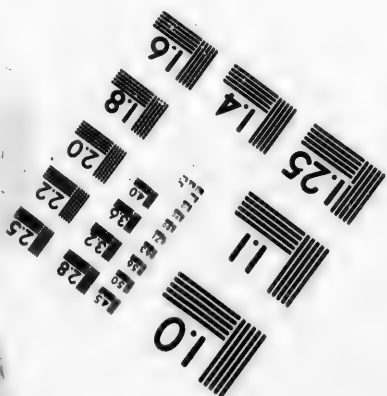
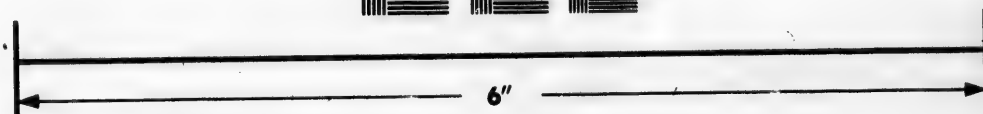
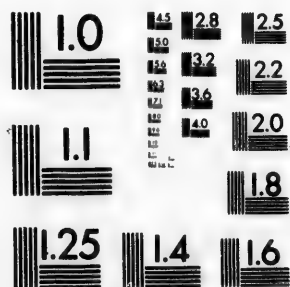


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Grindstone expressed his real concern at this sad news; and, as the day wore on, growing more and more at his ease with the priest, whose accent puzzled him: and recalling what he had said about having been Father Armand's college-mate in France, he made bold to ask him how it came to pass that he talked English not only extremely well, but more with the tongue of an Irishman than a Frenchman.

Father Eugene laughed, and good-naturedly explained that he was, indeed, of Irish birth and blood, but educated mainly in France.

"Somehow or other," he added: "in spite of many years of the '*Parlez-vous*,' I have never been able to lose a touch of the good old brogue from my tongue. *Après-tout*, (although you may not know it, my friend), the Irish brogue, as it is called, was really the best English of the days of Shakspeare. Old Queen Bess herself used to say *could* for cold, and *hate* for heat. If she were here, this minute, (the old termagant!) she'd say it's a mighty *could* evening we're having, after all the *hate* of an Indian summer day!"

There was truth in this, as well as fun; for the air had ceased to be balmy, and a chill, penetrating mist was striking the voyagers, from the river. But Timothy soon found the priest was prepared for the emergency. There was a plenty of warm rugs in the boat, as, also, of good food

for the journey. Being, thus, well wrapped and well-fed, the travellers floated comfortably and peacefully along their watery way to northern New York.

The great lakes safely crossed, they drew near, after many days, to the mouth of the Detroit river, where Timothy resumed his white wig and beard, as a precaution against spying Caughnawagas.

It was not until he held little Willy once more close to his breast, and felt the boy's warm arms tighten around his neck, that he realized how precious life still was to him, after all the dreadful risks he had suffered.

Father Peter gave the visitors a hearty welcome; and cheered them with the news that the Superior still lived, although badly paralyzed.

Word had come from Quebec, to fetch the invalid home to rest; but, although it was a mild, open winter, it was now close upon Christmas, and it was not deemed safe to travel so far with so helpless a charge as Father Armand in his present condition.

Little Willy was simply devoted to him. It was his joy to sit near him, and wait upon him; and Timothy soon saw how gentle and refined the boy had grown from constant companionship with the old scholar and saint.

He was not much surprised when the little fel-

low came to him, one day, (on his return from a visit to the Belleperches—poor Alexander's relatives), and begged his permission to become a Catholic. He had studied the Catechism thoroughly, (he said) and if Timothy, as his guardian, would only give consent, Father Peter would baptize him on Christmas Eve.

This proposition cost the good Grindstone considerable thought. Although he did not yet feel like going the same lengths as Willy, it seemed to him, from his queer experiences in his first visit to the Assumption church, and in the garret of Quilleries, the day after Alexander's murder—that the religion of these three priests he had encountered, had a great deal in it that was both true and beautiful.

Ignorance, prejudice, and early environment, had blinded him, before his captivity, to any real knowledge of Roman Catholicism; but his long talks with Father Eugene in the boats, and on their lonely tramps overland, had opened his eyes on a number of important points, so that he now thought it safe to consent to the boy's baptism.

Willy was in high spirits after that, varying his quiet times of study in the Superior's room, with long trots through the snow to the church, where he helped Father Peter and Father Eugene to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas.

Timothy himself took a hand, in time, at cleaning the candlesticks and other brass ornaments, and fetching evergreens from the forest to set around the altars in wooden boxes. He felt quite proud when he succeeded, under Father Peter's instructions, in stringing the spicy branches, so as to form glistening arches of holly and spruce for all the pillars and galleries of the house of God.

A Bethlehem crib was put up near one of the side-altars; and Willy nearly went wild with delight when he saw, for the first time, the lovely, lifelike figures of the Divine Mother and Babe, of St. Joseph and the animals, the shepherds and the kings, that Father Peter drew from the sacristy-closet, and set in their places in the little stable.

When all was finished, it was Christmas Eve. The church was beautiful to behold, being like a holy, woodland bower, full of delicious odors of spice and sweetness.

Timothy (*minus* his wig and beard in honor of the occasion), Willy, and the Belleperches, were gathered in the sacristy, about noon, waiting, with Father Eugene for the coming of Father Peter. He was to baptize the boy; and unusually flushed and disturbed was his merry face as, at last, he hurried in.

"Madame," said he, courteously, in a low tone,

to Mistress Belleperche, the only woman present: "Willy has already asked you to be his godmother. May I now trouble you, at short notice, to do the same kind office for three others whom I shall presently baptize?"

While Madame Belleperche—a short, round, rosy old lady—was assenting with voluble grace, Father Peter went to the door leading to the church, and beckoned in a group of women waiting there, with shawls or blankets over their heads.

There was scarcely time to note that two of this company were Indians, and three, whites—before a strange outcry burst forth on all sides, such as had never before been heard in that holy, silent place:

"TIMOTHY GRINDSTONE!"

"PRUDENCE SKILLET!"

"FAITH!" "HOPE!" "WILSON!"

And, in an instant, the five wanderers from Swan Island, so tragically separated—thus strangely brought together, once more—were clinging to each other, crying, laughing, talking all at once, half-crazy with the sudden joy of their unexpected reunion.

Out of the tumult, at last, rose the shrill voice of Prudence, who leaned half-exhausted against Mary and Catharine Tarbuki, crying: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath re-

joiced in God my Saviour.' . . . 'The sparrow
hath found her a house, and the turtle, a nest
where she may lay her young—Thine altars, O
my King and my God!'"

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE SECRET OF THE SCALES, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

SUMMER had bloomed early and sudden in the Indian Mission of Lorette.

A long spell of damp, hot weather (almost unknown to that high latitude), had made swift work with the snowdrifts, and forced everything green into warm and vivid life.

The fields were covered with wild flowers, the soft air was alive with the song of birds, and, before the middle of June, the great trees of the forest rustled their full robes, and whispered together, like overdressed beauties in a crowded ballroom.

It was the feast of St. Anthony, and a wonderful day at the Mission. All the long, bright morning, the Indians had been coming in, from near or distant settlements, to take part in the afternoon procession.

Many brought their tents along, and pitched them on the outskirts of the village. By noon, Lorette was like a huge beehive with its swarms of big and little Indians, running hither and thither, chatting, smoking, wrestling, or

painting themselves with the brightest of gaudy colors.

The great statue of St. Anthony, in its green square before the church, was the chief centre of attraction.

Crowds of Indians stood or squatted there, lost in admiration of the jeweled crown upon the head of the saint and of the Divine Infant that he carried; or staring delightedly at the brave show of gilded banners that glittered and waved from out huge masses of white and red roses, about the base of the statue. These could not quite hide the Latin inscription on the pedestal, that read:

PRESENTED TO THE MISSION AT LORETTE
BY LOUIS ST. ANGE AND EILEEN, HIS WIFE,
IN MEMORY OF THEIR BELOVED DAUGHTER, MARIANNE.
JUNE THE THIRTEENTH, A. D. 1754.

About two o'clock, the procession began to form, as far out on the edge of the village as where the visitors' tents were pitched.

The lay Brothers of the Mission were kept busy, going to and fro, arranging great and small, young and old, according to their proper places in the ranks.

It was a charming sight, and one witnessed nowhere in its wild, picturesque beauty, save among the Christianized aborigines of the New World.

First, came the little children, two and two, clad in loose gowns of white cotton, and wearing wreaths of wild flowers on their pretty heads. Each carried a small Indian basket, out of which, they scattered, as they went, handfuls of rose-leaves on the path.

Next, walked the maidens, also in white, white-veiled and flower-crowned, their double rank divided by a long rope of scarlet roses, to which each slender girl held fast by one hand, whilst she grasped her rosary-beads with the other.

The young men followed, bearing beautiful banners of gay silk, painted with pictures of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints, and embroidered with gold or silver tinsel that sparkled brilliantly in the clear sunlight. These were the work and gift of the Ursuline nuns of Quebec.

Here and there, in the ranks, a maiden or a youth carried rustic cages of wicker-work, containing white doves, red-breasted robins, or other smaller birds, which they let loose, from time to time, along the route. The soft flutter of wings and the happy twitter of the released captives mingled with the sweet strains of the *Litany of Loretto*, sung by the full, melodious voices of the marchers, to an accompaniment of native flutes, fifes, and drums.

The old people kept step, in pairs, as gallantly as the young.

The women all wore white veils upon their heads; and, right behind the plumed and painted men, came the priest of the Mission in gown and surplice, attended by a score of Indian acolytes in their scarlet woollen cossacks.

Noticeable among these, was a handsome, white-skinned boy, with bright auburn hair, carrying a great crucifix of brass that glittered like gold in the sun.

When the head of the procession reached the statue of St. Anthony, the two long ranks separated in front of it, by a simultaneous movement, leaving a broad passageway for the approach of the priest and his acolytes to the shrine.

Father Eugene (for it was he) knelt for a few moments on the prayer-stool at the foot of the statue: and then, rising, intoned the favorite hymn of St. Anthony, "*O Gloriosa Domina*," which all the people began, at once, to sing with him, with great sweetness and vigor:

"O glorious Virgin, ever blest,
All daughters of mankind above,
Who gavest nurture from thy breast
To God, with pure, maternal love,

"What we have lost through sinful Eve,
The Blossom sprung from thee restores,
And, granting bliss to souls that grieve,
Unbars the everlasting doors.

"O Gate, through which hath passed the King!
O Hall, whence light shone through the gloom!
The ransomed nations praise and sing
The Offspring of thy virgin womb!

"Praise from mankind, and heaven's host
To Jesus of a virgin sprung,
To Father and to Holy Ghost,
Be equal glory ever sung!"

Turning to the singers, and motioning them with his hand to sit down upon the grass, as the Divine Master did of yore to the multitudes who followed Him in Judea, the priest began to speak to them in simple words, (and in their own tongue) of the great St. Anthony—of his glory and power, both in heaven and on earth.

While he was telling them of the saint's devout life among the Augustines at Lisbon, with the Franciscans in Morocco, and later, as a mighty missionary in Bologna and Padua, where he died singing the *O Gloriosa Domina* in the presence (as he declared) of the glorious Queen of heaven and her Divine Son, who came to meet him,—a small, dark woman, in the white cap and apron of a waiting-maid, was seen coming from the near-by Mission house, supporting on her arm a tall lady clad in deepest mourning.

They noiselessly drew near the shrine, the worshippers making way for them as they came,

while a lay Brother set down at the iron-railing, a prayer-stool for the lady.

She knelt upon it, bowing low her head, and hiding her face in the thick folds of the long, black veil she wore.

Father Eugene's sympathetic eye fell for a moment upon the graceful, black-robed figure, that seemed almost bent double with its weight of woe; but a peculiar light, as of secret exultation, came into it, as he went on to tell his listeners a little story of the saint of Padua.

A picture, (he said) had been painted by a great artist, three centuries before, for a grand church in Rome. It was that of St. Anthony. He was there depicted as holding in his right hand a big book on which rested a loaf of bread, whilst his left hand pressed to his bosom a bright, glowing flame.

"What signify these things, my children?" said the priest. "What mean this loaf of bread—this flame of fire? The fire represents St. Anthony's burning love for God and his fellow men. The bread recalls a miracle that happened in Padua, not long after our saint's death. Once to the church that was there builded to his honor, a baby boy named Tomasino was drowned, while playing at a pond. When his little corpse was taken from the water, his mother, half-crazy from grief, threw herself upon the small, drip-

ping body, crying out to St. Anthony that if he would but restore her son to her, alive and well, she vowed to give to the poor a measure of corn, equal to the weight of the child. Immediately, the dead boy rose up in living beauty, and ran, smiling, into the outstretched arms of his happy mother!"

A sob broke from the breast of the black-veiled lady at the *prie-dieu*. She bowed her head lower and lower upon her hands; but again, the strange, exultant light came into Father Eugene's eyes, and a faint smile hovered about his firm lips.

"To-day, dear children," he continued, looking around upon his people: "to-day, your devoted friend, your generous benefactress, Madame St. Ange, is about to renew on her own behalf, the noble offering made to our saint by the poor mother of Padua, more than five hundred and twenty years ago. She offers to the poor of this mission, a measure of flour equal to the weight of a child of five years—equal to what might now be the weight of her little lost daughter, Marianne St. Ange.—Brother Loyola, see to it that your men do their work!"

The lay Brother, at this word from the priest, made a sign to a group of Indians at the door of the Mission strong-house, close at hand. Several of these powerful fellows immediately brought

forward an enormous pair of scales, while the rest lugged to the front of the shrine, some huge bags of flour.

"When the grain of this meal was first planted," said Father Eugene, "you must know, my dear children, that I went about the field, sprinkling it with holy water, and saying these solemn words: '*Bless, O Lord, this seed, and through the merits of our blessed father, St. Anthony, deign to multiply it, and cause it to bring forth fruit a hundredfold, and preserve it from lightning and tempest. Who livest and reignest, world without end, Amen.*' Praise to God's goodness, it has multiplied, it has brought forth fruit a hundredfold! Now, all that we need is the weight whereby to test the measure. Joseph!" said he aside to the white acolyte who held the crucifix, "tell N'-'o-kum to fetch the child without delay."

"Pardon, my Father," interposed Brother Loyola, "but the infant is already in the balance."

And Father Eugene, stepping closer to the scales, had to bite back the smile upon his lips, as he saw the plump form of a little girl curled up, asleep, in the deep dish of the balance.

He quickly recovered himself, however, slipping on his stole, as the Indians, instructed by the lay Brother, began to shovel the fair white flour from the sacks into the empty balance of the

scales. Then, he proceeded to read from his old-time Ritual, as follows:

"BLESSING OF CORN OF THE WEIGHT OF A CHILD—*Benedictio ad pondus pueri* :

"We humbly beseech Thy clemency, O Lord Jesus Christ, through the merits and prayers of our most glorious father St. Anthony, that Thou wouldst deign to preserve from ill, fits, plague, epidemic, fever, and mortality this, Thy servant, whom in Thy name, and in honor of our blessed father St. Anthony, we place in this balance with wheat, the weight of her body, for the comfort of the poor. . . . Deign to give her length of days, and permit her to attain the evening of life; and, by the merits and prayers of the Saint we invoke, grant her a portion of Thy holy and eternal inheritance, guarding and preserving her from all her enemies. Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen."

Dipping his sprinkler in the silver vessel which Joseph held toward him, the priest finished the benediction with a plentiful dash of the holy water over both balances of the scales, now resting evenly on their standard.

A queer little scream came from the human side of the scales! The cold water on her face had awakened the little one from her nap.

She scrambled to her feet, and tried to stand upright in the dish—holding fast with plump fingers to its rim, as it wobbled about, and staring over it, bewildered and only half-awake, at the throng of dark faces before her. A murmur of admiration went up, on every side, even from the Indians.

She was all in white, with a wreath of wild flowers on her pretty head—a lovely, rosy little girl, with great, black, wonderful eyes, almost velvety in their softness, and damp rings of red-gold hair curling upon her broad, white forehead.

Her dimpled neck and arms were bare, and drops of holy water glittered on them, like dew-drops upon fresh lilies.

Madame St. Ange hearing the murmur from the crowd, and feeling oppressed by the heat, flung back her long, black veil, and found herself face to face with this amazing—this most charming apparition.

"Mamma, dear little mamma!" cried the Weight in the balance, making frantic efforts to leap from the dish.

It was too much for the heart and nerves of the poor, overwrought lady.

With a heavy sigh, and a murmured:

"Marianne, at last! St. Anthony be praised and thanked!"—she reeled, and fell in a deep swoon into Margot's faithful arms.

When she came to herself, she was in a room of the Mission house with her maid and Father Eugene.

Lying there upon a rude couch, in happy weakness and languor, she could hear softly, yet distinctly, the voices of the Indians in the distance, chanting a musical chorus. They were singing the *Hymn to St. Anthony*, as their solemn procession marched back, in the red light of the setting sun, to its starting-point at the tents.

Madame listened dreamily to these words that St. Bonaventure wrote in honor of his holy friend:

"If then you ask for miracles,
Death, error, all calamities,
The leprosy and demons fly,
And health succeeds infirmities,

"The hungry seas forego their prey,
The prisoner's cruel chains give way,
While palsied limbs and treasures lost
Both young and old, recovered, boast.

"And perils perish, plenty's board
Is heaped on hunger's famished board:
Let those relate who know it well,
Let Padua of her patron tell!"

The priest drew near the couch whereon the lady lay, and stooped over her, feeling her pulse with a skilful touch.

Margot courtesied to him, and quitted the

room. It was easy to surmise whither she had gone, and for what purpose.

"You are better, my child?" said Father Eugene presently, in a very gentle voice.

"Was it a dream?" the lady answered, forgetting herself and her weakness: "or did I really see my darling, my little Marianne again? Tell me the truth, my Father, and I shall believe you, although I know you not. They told me Father Armand was here."

"Father Armand is here," said the priest: "but too ill to leave his bed. You have really seen your little daughter, and in a few moments, when you are better, you shall see her again, and take her home with you."

He paused, and looked steadfastly at her, before he added:

"Are you strong enough, my child, to support another surprise?"

Her lovely eyes dilated, and she grew a shade paler about her lips; but she smiled in his face with the trustfulness of a little child looking up to its father for comfort.

"Eileen!" said he, and his voice trembled a little: "do you not know me? But why should I ask it? You were but a child when I went away to college. I am your father's brother, Eugene O'Connell!"

"Thanks be to God!" was all she said, but

the happy light deepened in her eyes, and the warm color in her pale cheeks.

"But Louis, your husband?" questioned Father Eugene: "does that black dress you wear,—that widow's cap upon your young head, mean that——"

"He died less than a year gone, heaven rest his precious soul!" murmured Eileen, as she wiped away a tear. "He was lost in the forest of Detroit for a day and night, last autumn was a year. At his age, the exposure and strain were fatal. He never recovered from the fever that followed."

"Mamma, mamma! I want my mamma!" cried a sweet, wilful voice at the door, and little Love Leslie burst into the room, like a small whirlwind, escaping gleefully from the clutches of Margot, who pursued her with a little garden-hat in her hand. She darted straight into Madame's outstretched arms, like a wild bird into its nest, and cuddled close to her, while the blissful Eileen showered kisses of passionate warmth upon the tender cheek, and brow, and lips.

The touch of the child, the sound of her merry voice, her soft, warm pressure on her bosom and arms, seemed to revive Eileen as with a life-giving cordial; and presently, to Father Eugene's surprise, she stood up, and began to straighten Love's tumbled dress and ringlets. Then, with

Margot's assistance, she tied on her own bonnet, and expressed herself as strong enough to depart for Quebec, where she had been staying with some friends of her husband.

As it was only eight miles distant, and her own handsome coach and horses were at hand to convey her thither, her uncle could make no objections.

She would gladly have carried him off with her, then and there, but it was impossible.

Promising to visit her at Montreal, (his own duties permitting) as soon as she should be settled again at home, the priest took little Love by the hand to lead her to the carriage.

But that strong-spirited young lady soon showed them that she had a mind of her own—that she did not intend to turn her back ungratefully upon the one friend she valued most at Lorette. Even the delightful prospect of riding home, like *Princess Belle-belle* in a beautiful chariot, could not tempt her from her allegiance.

"Mamma!" she cried, stopping short with a bewitching smile and gesture: "I can't go home without Joseph!"

"And what, pray, is Joseph?" asked Eileen highly amused (we are sorry to say) at her darling's wilfulness: "is it a dog, or a cat, or a wild Indian?"

"Wait, till you see, little mamma," said Love,

trotting with business-like alacrity to the door of the room. "He's just outside here, in the hall, where I told him to stay!"

And, in a moment, she was back again, like a dancing sunbeam, pulling in with her Joseph, the acolyte, now in his Indian dress, and looking rather red and frightened.

"It's a wild Indian after all!" sighed Madame in despair; then, suddenly struck by the strong likeness between the children, as they stood, hand in hand, before her:

"Who is this boy?" she asked, almost sharply, of Father Eugene, who was laughing, and pinching Joseph's blushing cheek.

"A pet of Father Armand," returned the priest. "He accompanied him hither, with me, from the Huron Mission. I don't see how he will part with him."

"Father Armand said he would let me go, if Madame wished it," said the little fellow quietly: "although if it were not for Marianne (whom I love), I would be very loath to leave him."

Father Eugene, looking keenly at the boy's bright, manly face, suddenly remembered the record of the Leslie family that Father Peter had shown him at the Assumption Mission, when he told him Timothy's thrilling story.

He drew closer to his niece, and spoke to her in a whisper:

"There's more in this matter, I begin to think, than appears on the surface. Better not separate the children, Eileen. Take Joseph with you, at least for the present. If you find, later on, that he does not suit you, it will be easy for you to return him to us."

So it fell out, that Love, as usual, had her way, pushing Joseph ahead of her into the family carriage; and Madame and her maid presently drove off with them to Quebec, Margot muttering, as she went, in her corner of the coach:

"Well! well! *Monsieur St. Antoine* never does things by halves! He has not only given back Madame, her daughter, but presented her, at the same time, with a son! *Grace à M. St. Antoine!*"

CHAPTER XV.

A DISCOVERY AND A DILEMMA.

It was well on toward the summer of 1757, before Brother La Tour could spare Timothy Grindstone. He had proved himself most useful to Brother Regis in the work of the Mission storehouse; but, when the days began to lengthen, Father Peter made a long-intended change.

He sent the honest fellow to oversee the Mission farm at Bois Blanc. Timothy was glad of the furlough to green fields, and outdoor work under the blue skies. Life at the farm would deprive him, it was true, of Willy's constant companionship, and of his frequent intercourse with Prudence and the girls down the river. But it was arranged that he was to spend every Sunday at Assumption; and as Willy visited him at Bois Blanc a couple of times a week, and Prudence and Mary Tarbuki were often sent to the farm to do the extra washing, scrubbing, milking and mending, Grindstone had no chance to grow lonesome in his new quarters.

To help him still further to good spirits, Father Peter, on one of his visits to the farm, rummaged

out of a closet an old violin that had belonged to a dead lay Brother, and gave it to Timothy.

He had been used to play the fiddle by ear in the happy, bygone days at Swan Island; and it was surprising what a spice of contentment and good cheer, this gift imparted to the new overseer.

He delighted to clean himself up after supper; and spent the best part of his evenings, after his hard day's work, fiddling away at his old-fashioned tunes.

Willy was enchanted with the music. He kept so close to his friend's elbow, on such occasions, that he scarce had room to draw his bow. It did the player's heart good, to see the boy laugh till the tears ran down his cheeks, when a couple of the farm-hands danced a jig, as they sometimes did, on the floor of the big kitchen (or, as it grew warmer, on the green outside) to the lively strains of Timothy's fiddle, in *Money Musk*, or *Peter's Street*. Those were happy, peaceful days for the good Grindstone. The first shadow cast upon them was that of Willy's departure with Father Armand to Canada.

The milder weather and a slight improvement in his condition, at last allowed the sick priest to travel, by slow stages, to the house of his rest. Father Eugene being on hand to conduct him safely thither, it was judged best that Willy (or

Joseph, as they called him by his baptismal name) should go along, also, and the Provincial approving, be put to college in Quebec.

So, Timothy went over, one beautiful June day, to the Mission house, and said farewell to his dear little friend.

Then, he helped Father Peter and Father Eugene to lift into the wagon and stretch upon a mattress, the almost helpless form of the Superior. His eyes grew dim with tears as he felt on his head the touch of the venerable priest's white and wasted hand, and heard his whispered: "God reward you, good Timothy, and lead you soon to the perfect light of Truth!"

The wagon was rolling slowly away to the river-landing, with Willy waving his hand vigorously from the back, before Tim discovered that he had certain companions in misery.

Prudence Skillet, (whose Christian name was Martha), was sniffing away at his elbow—too low in spirits even to quote her favorite texts of Scripture—while Faith and Hope Leslie (now Agnes and Helen) sobbed bitterly beside her, their aprons thrown up, disconsolately, over their heads.

Father Peter came to the rescue on the spot, with the merry and wise proposal that Timothy on the return of the wagon from the landing, should take Prudence and the little girls back

with him to the farm, and make a holiday of it, gathering wild flowers for our Lady's shrine.

The cheerful priest had not finished a decade of his beads, before the horses, Major and White-Back, had returned; and the wagon was rattling away up the road to Bois Blanc, with Tim and his friends inside, already much diverted by the change.

When they reached the farm, which Grindstone had quitted at daybreak, he sent Prudence and the girls at once to the adjacent woods, to gather the altar-flowers, promising to join them as soon as he had had a look at the men and the stables.

He was leading Major and White-Back round to their stalls, when one of the hands stopped him for a word.

He was a Yankee captive, named Pringle, whom Father Armand had redeemed from the Hurons, for work upon the farm.

"Stranger in the mare's stable, sir," he whispered to Timothy. "Must'uv alipped in, this mornin', when you was takin' out the beasts."

"When did you find him there?" asked Timothy, startled, yet stern.

"Daybreak, when I went in to feed *Souris*. He wuz a-lyin' on his face in the straw. 'Peared to be drunk or sick-like," said the man.

Timothy hurried toward the barn, wild vi-

sions of Caughnewaga spies rushing through his brain.

"Your axe, Pringle!" he turned back to say to the other, who carried one: "and stand ready to fight for your life, if necessary!" he added.

Then, stepping cautiously into the stable, he came upon the stranger, lying in the straw, almost at the mare's feet.

The first look at him gave Timothy to know that he had nothing to fear from the intruder.

He seemed a small, insignificant creature, in shabby clothing, threadbare and dust-covered.

His old rusty hat lay beside him, and his wretched boots were broken and water-logged.

He lay, face downward upon the straw, as Pringle had described him, and a more forlorn object for a white man, Grindstone had never seen.

"Hi, there!" he called, seizing the shabby shoulder, and shaking it soundly. No answer came from the living scarecrow; and Timothy, alarmed at his silence, promptly turned the figure over on its back.

A strong ray of sunshine from the stable-window fell full upon the man's face.

Timothy almost jumped out of his skin at the sight of it.

"Bless my heart!" he shouted: "why it's Lot Leslie himself! And he looks to be half-

dead. Softly, *Souris!* Softly, my girl, or you'll step on the poor fellow, and finish him completely!"

The mare turned her bright, intelligent eyes upon him, whinnying her friendly assurance, that she meant no harm to the stranger.

And, there was Pringle, in the very nick of time, ready to fetch a shutter from one of the barn-windows, and help Timothy to stretch poor Lot upon it.

In this fashion, they carried him over to the farmhouse.

Timothy, for a while, almost fancied his old master to be dead—so ashen, limp, and lifeless did he appear, when they laid him on the clean, comfortable bed upstairs.

But, after they had covered him up well with blankets, and put to his feet stone jugs filled with boiling water, the warmth revived him wonderfully. He was soon able to take a smoking draught of liquor, mulled by Timothy: and, later on, some hot chicken-broth that Prudence made for him.

For she and the girls had been hurriedly summoned from the woods by Pringle; and the excitement that followed their arrival at the farm would be difficult to describe.

Suffice it to say, that it was well their altar-flowers were gathered in advance; for no one

had time for the rest of that day to do anything else, save wait upon Lot Leslie—to nurse him, and cook for him.

The poor man was literally starved and travel-worn.

He had tramped the country, for weeks, from the St. Lawrence to the Detroit, with little food and less shelter—running terrible risks on field and flood from wild beasts or prowling savages.

The loss of little Love at Three Rivers, just when he was sure of carrying her back to New England, her open aversion to him, and the bitter reproaches of Wheelwright on his return to the *Golden Lamb*, had almost proved a death-blow to a constitution never strong, and already undermined by many sorrows and hardships.

His journey from the St. Lawrence to the Detroit, in his weakened condition, had proven a dreadful experience. Completely exhausted in body, and broken in spirit, Lot Leslie had crawled, that morning, into the stable at Bois Blanc, when Timothy's back was turned; and, with his blood freezing to ice, in that darkest hour before day, had lain down to die, in the straw at *Souris'* feet.

Later on, when he first came out of his dead faint to a comforting sense of a soft, warm bed in a neat, sunshiny room: when he looked around to discover Timothy and Prudence on one side, and Faith and Hope on the other, while his nos-

trils were regaled with delicious odors of hot spirits and savory broth—the poor fellow broke down utterly, and cried like a baby.

But, before evening, though still weak, he had grown wonderfully chipper. At sunset, Pringle drove Prudence and the girls back to the settlement, leaving Lot, bolstered up in bed, with a light in his eyes and a color in his cheek, almost like those of the old days at home.

Timothy had hard lines of it getting him to rest, that night. He had so much to tell, so much to listen to, that sleep seemed out of the question.

At last, Tim, honest fellow, remembered his fiddle, and fetching it, played softly on it all the old-time tunes—full of the sweetness and sadness of Swan Island days.

The sound of the sea washing on the rocks at home, the voices of the dead wife and the lost baby, with murmurs of the salt wind blowing over the blossoming marshes, seemed to melt into the simple music, and soothe the poor tired creature to rest.

He slept, with a peaceful smile upon his lips; and Timothy lay down beside him, comforted, and dreamed happy dreams of Willy and of *one other dear one*, until the dawn of day.

In the course of the morning, Father Feter came over to the farm, and had a talk with

Grindstone. Pringle and Prudence had told him all about the tramp in the stable. Faith and Hope had coaxed him to let their father stay at the farm, at least, until he was strong enough to trudge away elsewhere.

The good priest had a look at Lot, and a chat with him, alone; and ended by telling Timothy to feed him on the best, and clothe him well, and, as soon as he should be fit for it, to give him work at the barn.

So, like a storm-tossed bark anchored in a safe haven, poor Leslie found himself, at last, the settled inmate of a comfortable home, with plenty to eat and to wear.

His work was of a kind he understood and liked; and it did not distress him, in the least, to be now forced to take his orders from his former serving-man.

A just and reasonable master, Timothy proved himself to be; and if Lot could have forgotten that Willy was away in Canada, and little Love, Heaven alone knew where, among the Indians—he might have contented himself with his light tasks about the farm, and looked for nothing more.

But, a tender-hearted creature, was Lot, and passing fond of his own. Many a night, when Timothy touched the bow to his fiddle, and drew forth the sweet strains of *Wandering Willy*, or

My love is like the red, red rose, the hunger for his little children burned in him, like a consuming fever, and the big tears rolled down his sal-low, sunken cheeks.

His two elder girls often came to see him, and Mary Tarbuki always made him welcome to her lodge; but plain, commonplace Faith and sickly, scrawny Hope (who were their father's feminine counterpart), could not console him for the absence of the two bright, handsome little ones—the pride of his heart—in whom their lost mother's comeliness lived again.

So it came to pass that, after some months of peaceful, wholesome labor at Bois Blanc, Lot gave Timothy to understand that he could content himself no longer. The keen longing to seek and recover his lost children was driving him, day and night (he said) to take to the road, once more, and tramp his way to Canada.

Grindstone thought it a foolish quest. He tried to convince Lot that Willy was better off than he knew—on the fair way, as he was, to become a great scholar; but Lot's only answer to him was: "You're not a father, Tim, and you know nothin' about the feelin's of a father!"—which, being the truth, Timothy could say no more; and was forced to let him go.

Meantime, Willy and Love were happy as

lambs at play, in the handsome old house at Montreal—every hour growing nearer and dearer to Madame and Margot.

Love had begun to go to the day school of the Ursuline nuns; and Willy was a pupil at the Jesuits' college, not far off, where Father Eugene arrived from Lorette, in course of time, to teach one of the classes.

He told Willy that his dear Father Armand had just died in Quebec; and when the little fellow turned white as a sheet, and burst into tears and choking sobs, he spoke so beautifully to him of the emptiness of all earthly things—of the glorious reward God reserves for such pure, heroic souls as his venerable friend's, that Willy could not continue to grieve for his loss; but labored every day, more and more to profit by his instructions, and imitate his virtues.

Before Father Eugene had had a chance to visit Eileen, he received a note from Margot—a secret, mysterious note which puzzled him greatly. It read:

"Come to Madame, my mistress, as soon as you can. There is something very wrong with her, something which she hides from her faithful Margot. Be discreet, and betray me not."

The children were out at play in the great sunny garden, and Eileen St. Ange sat alone in

her charming old parlor, when Margot, who had been on the watch for him, ushered Father Eugene into her lady's presence.

It was a beautiful room, rich with furniture of polished rosewood. There were costly curtains of velvet, and silken tapestries, wrought by the dainty fingers of the master's long-dead ancestresses; and all about the lovely young mistress, were strewn *curios* and priceless treasures in gold and silver, crystal and china, from old France, heirlooms of the high and ancient family of St. Ange.

Old-fashioned Sévres bowls filled with roses, and set here and there on oval, spindle-legged tables, shed delicious, musky odors on the dim air.

But Madame, in her black dress and snowy widow's cap, looked thinner and paler than when her uncle had last seen her.

She sat before an antique writing-desk of ebony and pearl, with a manuscript of parchment open under her hand. A small, but exquisite, lamp of hammered brass and amber crystal burned beside her ivory casket of sealing-wax, exposed with her amethyst crest. Its soft, golden light brought into relief the dark circles around her brilliant eyes, and deepened the sad, drooping lines drawn about the delicate lips.

At the sound of the priest's entry, she rar-

to him with the open-hearted confidence of a troubled child, greeting its kind father.

"What is it, dear niece?" asked Father Eugene, as Eileen suddenly burst into tears.

"I am sorely troubled, my uncle," she answered, when she could control her voice sufficiently to speak: "and sadly need your counsel, although I tremble to seek it.—I have made a strange and startling discovery."

The priest remaining silent, she continued:

"Not long since, whilst searching in this old desk of Louis' for a lost account-book, I came unexpectedly upon this paper" (she laid her jeweled hand upon the parchment on the desk): "It is my husband's last will and testament."

"The one he executed just after the birth of your child—leaving you all he possessed?"

"No," she whispered, with white lips: "one of later date, of which I was wholly ignorant. He made it a month after I adopted the strange child that N'o-kum sold to me. *This*," (again touching the will), "save for a small annuity, to me for life,—leaves house, lands, money—all he owned, in short, to his nephew and namesake in France, the young Louis St. Ange!"

Father Eugene knit his brows, and the hot blood of his Irish forefathers rushed to his cheek.

"What was his motive for this, think you?" he asked after a pause, full of significance.

"Pride of blood, I fear," she answered. "I knew him to be very sensitive on the score of his family name; but I never knew, until *now*, how fiercely he resented my giving it to this outcast child. He said little at the time: but privately, he settled the matter in his own aristocratic fashion."

"And everything goes to this nephew, absolutely, and at once?" questioned the priest.

"Absolutely—yes; at once—no. Young Louis St. Ange is to inherit all—save my pittance—when he comes of age. That will not be for five years yet."

"Have you submitted the matter to your family lawyer?" asked Father Eugene, glancing over the parchment on the desk.

"Yes," returned Eileen: "but without any change in the situation. It was he who drew up the will for my husband. It is perfectly legal, he assures me: and Mr. St. Ange was of sound, disposing mind when he made it. The only flaw in the whole proceeding was his leaving it in this old desk, instead of depositing it for safe-keeping with his lawyer, or at his banker's. That bit of carelessness cost me a terrible temptation."

She broke down again, and covered her face with her hands.

"It would have been so easy to destroy it!"

she whispered: "I was sorely tempted; not for my own sake, but for the children's, Uncle Eugene. How can I keep them and educate them, as becomes their position, on the paltry pittance that will soon be all I can call my own?"

"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," said the priest quietly. "We have five long years in which to consider this question, and prepare for the worst. God alone knows, my child, what other changes five years may bring!"

"Mamma! mamma!" screamed little Love, darting, that moment, into the room, followed by Willy. "Hide us, dear little mamma! Lock the door—quick! Don't let that horrid little man steal me again!"

"What does this mean, my pet?" cried Madame, clasping her darling to her breast, and soothing her, as one might soothe a frightened bird. "Where is 'that horrid little man'?"

"At the garden gate," said Willy, who was calm and grave.

His many strange and sobering experiences had made the boy precociously old and serious in his ways.

"It seems to me," he pursued, with a musing hesitation: "I have seen him somewhere before—a long time ago. The gate was open. Mari-
anne and I were looking out at a pedlar with his pack. The first thing we knew, the man was

staring at us, and pointing his finger, screaming in English: 'There's my daughter! That's my son! Come to your father, little Love!'"

"That's what he called me before, when he and that cross-eyed man stole me in the wagon!" pouted the small girl. "He slobbered all over me, saying I was his baby, his little Love! But I ain't—I'm my mamma's baby, I'm my mamma's love; and I hate that horrid little dirty *mendicant*!"

"He *did* look poor," said Willy, slowly: "but Father Armand told me once that it was a good thing for one's soul to be poor. He said our Lord was poor, and loved and blessed the poor; and that it was as hard for a needle to go through the eye of a camel, as for—as for ——"

"You mean as hard for a camel to go through the eye of a needle," corrected Father Eugene, smiling: "as for a rich man to go through the gate of heaven."

"I don't care," pouted Love, shaking her plump shoulders: "I like to be rich, in spite of your 'camels' and your 'needles' eyes,' whatever *they* are. Please, dear little mamma, send the steward to the garden to drive that nasty man away!"

"Is he still at the gate?" asked Eileen in surprise.

"Yes," answered Willy: "he said he wouldn't

go away until he took sister and me with him, if he had to wait all night for his children."

Madame and Father Eugene looked steadily and significantly into each other's eyes. Then the priest took up his *barrette*, and quitted the room, saying as he went: "Keep your soul in peace, my daughter, while I look into this matter." He added gently, as she followed him to the threshold for a parting word: "Fenelon says: 'It is better to wait and open the door with a key, than to break the lock through impatience.' God bless you, Eileen!—who knows but what I am about to find the key to your present difficulty? *Au revoir!*"

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CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE DOUBLE HOUSE AT PHILADELPHIA.

FIVE years have passed since the events narrated in our last chapter—five years of bloody incident and startling changes to the French settlers in the colonies, and their Indian allies.

Louisburg, Niagara and Fort du Quesne, are in the hands of the English. Quebec has fallen—adding one of the most picturesque scenes to this romantic drama of war, and crowning it with the tragic deaths of Wolfe and Montcalm—and Canada has surrendered to the British crown.

The Mission of the Assumption at Detroit has suffered, in its turn, from the devastating ravages of war. The young braves of the Huron nation, long since, deserted their lodges and their hunting-grounds to follow their French brothers to the battlefields of the north and east.

Returning no more, they have left their places at the camp-fires to be filled by the old men of the tribe, by the squaws and little children.

The Mission-farm forsaken: agriculture, hunting and trading abandoned—the revenues of the Mission storehouse and the Mission-farm began

to dwindle, scarcely sufficing to furnish cat's meat to Brother Fine-Ear, whose noble proportions had shrunk, and glossy coat roughened with the hard times.

They no longer afforded a decent salary to our old friend, Timothy Grindstone. He had grown sick of war, and of rumors of war, and, at last, was anxious to settle himself in life.

One pure, sweet hope had been steadily ripening in his heart for a couple of years. His dream, by day and night, was of a happy, peaceful home in the distant City of Brotherly Love, where he might gather around him the friends he held most dear, and rest content under the shadow of his own vine and fig-tree, far removed from the din of bloody battle.

He delayed no longer to become a member of the holy Catholic Church, to which he had inclined since the day he heard his first Mass in the Mission church of the Assumption.

There, Father Peter instructed and baptized him; and, the year before Major Rogers and his gallant Rangers sailed into the mouth of the Detroit to demand the surrender of the Fort, and while Pontiac, chief of the Ottawas, was playing fast and loose with both French and English, — Timothy said farewell to Bois Blanc, and journeyed down alone to the city of Penn.

A happy accident, here, won him the favor of

an eccentric old Quaker lady—Mistress Dorothy Pemberton, a rich widow without chick or child.

She engaged him first as her coachman, and later on, as a sort of steward, or general-utility-man, on her handsome farm on Walnut street, not far from the banks of the Delaware river—then, a rural quarter of Philadelphia, filled with the homesteads of the wealthy Friends.

To the south, lay the Bettering House (or retreat for poor Friends) and the old Quaker Alms-house (since made famous by Longfellow)—which then stood, as he says:

“—in the suburbs, in the midst of meadows and woodlands.”

Between these two buildings, was what Timothy's mistress called “the Popish Mass-house,” where the honest fellow soon found strength and comfort for his soul.

Father Robert Harding was the pastor at that date, (assisted by the German missionary, Father Steinmeier or Farmer); and his chapel of St. Joseph, newly-built, was then only five years old.

It was an oblong structure, sixty by forty feet, rough-cast and pebble-dashed, with an arched ceiling, and no galleries, save a small organ loft. There were only about eight windows in all—but they shed light enough to reveal the beauties of two fine pictures in oil, that hung upon the homely walls—those of St. Ignatius and St.

Francis of Assissi, which had been sent from Europe to the first pastor of St. Joseph's.

Timothy liked best, however, the splendid painting of the Holy Family, that hung over the one little altar of the chapel—the work of the Philadelphia artist, Benjamin West, although executed in Rome.

Humble as was this little house of God, Timothy often knelt there at the Communion-rail, side by side with the grand foreign ambassadors, whose stately mansions were located south and west of the church, and who, with their large retinues of *attachés* and servants worshipped regularly at St. Joseph's.

There, he saw the son of Lionell Brittin, the first (known) Philadelphia convert to Catholicity, and his father's freed slaves, *Quan* and *Dinah*.¹ And there, too, he met numbers of the poor Acadians who, through the kindness of Mr. Benezet, were then living in their small, wooden, one-story huts on the north side of Pine street, between Fifth and Sixth streets. A timid, forlorn lot, they were.

In his free time, and of evenings, Timothy went for a little schooling to Magnus Falconer, the schoolmaster, who kept at Randal Yetton's, a goldsmith, opposite Gray's Alley, Front street.

Fourth street was then the westernmost bound-

¹ See Griffin's Am. Cath. His. Researches, April, 1899.

dary of Philadelphia. It was, what its founder, Penn, had desired it to be—"a green country town"; and Father Greaton, the first pastor of St. Joseph's, has recorded that he saw there, on all sides, "gardens paled, and orchards here and there."¹ The roads in the neighborhood of Third and Walnut streets, (now so well-graded and closely-built), were then only "narrow cart-ways ascending deep defiles, and causing foot-passengers to walk high above them, on the sides of the shelving banks."²

After Mass or Vespers on Sundays, Timothy often strolled, under the spreading walnut and buttonwood trees, to the great Pond, then to be seen at Fourth and Market streets, the "proper head of Dock creek," (now Dock street), where the ducks sailed peacefully to and fro, viewing their charms in their clear, watery mirror. He longed for Willy at such times. He even caught a fish, now and again, of a holiday, in the spring back of Fourth street, to the northwest, when the silvery-backed creatures came up the creek at high tide.

He was contented in his quiet home at Dorothy Pemberton's. The old Quakeress soon found her prejudices against "Papists" giving way before the sound sense and good example of her favorite serving-man. Timothy was a keen-wit-

¹ See Griffin's *Am. Cath. His. Researches*, April, 1899. ² *Ibid.*

ted Yankee, well-instructed in his religion, and wonderfully posted on a number of knotty points, by his years of close contact with educated and intelligent Catholics.

He was able to answer the old lady's questions as to his faith, with clearness and excellent logic; and she found him so brave and truthful, so honest, and conscientiously devoted to her interests in the smallest details, that she ended by conceiving a high esteem for her man and his religion.

Meantime, poor Timothy was beginning to have many a lonely hour, many a yearning thought of his old friends, the Leslies.

It was a time when, owing to several grave causes, it was almost impossible for people to communicate with their dear ones at a distance. Letters were hard to write—at least, for such as Timothy and his beloved Swan Islanders—and, in that troublous period, still harder to send, or have delivered at their destination.

Willy had written once from Montreal, telling of his meeting with his father at Madame St. Ange's garden-gate. And Timothy was contented, for the time, to know that his dear boy was well and happy; and that Lot had gone back to service with Jean Martin, the baker.

As to Prudence and the girls, he had left them, to all appearances, safely settled with Mary and Catharine Tarbuki; and he knew nothing, as yet,

of the sad mishap that had befallen them, a month after his departure.

A chance spark in the night, kindled by the blind grandmother to light her pipe, had set fire to the old squaw's clothing.

Before day-dawn, the lodge was burned to the ground (with many of the adjoining huts), and poor old Anne *Why-washi-brooch*, in spite of the heroic efforts of her daughter and grandchild, perished in the flames.

In their homeless affliction, Mary and Catharine hurried with their three white slaves to their best friend and sole earthly adviser—Father Peter, at Assumption Mission.

He received them with the sympathy and loving interest of a true father.

While Mary and Catharine stood before him in their dark, gentle beauty, and told their sad story in simple words, without excitement or emphasis, the good priest sat at his desk, and carefully studied the situation.

Just at that time, there were weighing on his mind other matters of still graver, and more terrible import.

The evening previous, he had entertained at supper, one who was known as "the Irish Mohawk chief," the famous Sir William Johnson.

Colonel Duquesne and Major La Motte had been present, as well as Pierre Meloche, the

millier, Charles Parant, his relative, Belleperche, Beaufait, and de Bondie. But Meloche had lingered after all the other guests, for a secret word with Father Peter.

The Jesuit's dark cheek had paled—his calm eyes had dilated, as the miller whispered in his ear:

"Tell Major Gladwin to beware of Pontiac and his men!"

And when the priest had questioned further, Meloche admitted:

"The Ottawas are planning an immediate attack on the fort. If successful, it will prove a bloody massacre!"

How to communicate this well-accredited warning to the commandant, without betraying its source—had been the subject of Father Peter's anxious thoughts for many sleepless hours, when *Omi-je* and her homeless ones came, at the dawn, to consult him.

But, with the characteristic self-control of the missionary, he immediately bent all the powers of his wise and keen mind to the adjustment of their future.

A bright thought flashed upon him.

On his desk, that moment, lay a letter, just fetched him by a Huron runner from Montreal.

It was from the Superioress of a convent, well-known to him there. In it, she besought him to

send her, if possible, some good, pious women, either white or Indian, whom he might deem suitable to serve as lay Sisters in her house.

He had long recognized and admired the heroic virtues of Mary and Catharine Tarbuki. He was thoroughly acquainted with the heavenly secrets of their holy, interior life. They had often expressed to him their burning desire to become nuns—to consecrate themselves entirely to God, in the humblest convent-home that would be willing to receive them.

God Himself, by this unexpected severing of all their earthly ties, seemed now to open the way for them to their long-desired end.

It was beautiful to see their dark faces glow, and their soft eyes sparkle, as Father Peter told them of the blessed refuge, heaven had prepared for them in this gloomy hour of their bitterest desolation.

"We will go at once to the house of the Lord, if our Father will permit us," said *Omi-Mee*, with quiet decision.

"And I, forsooth, will go with you," said Prudence, abruptly. "'It's better to be an abject in the house of the Lord, than dwell in the tabernacles of sinners.' I'm sorry stuff for the making of a nun, you may be thinking, Father Peter, but mayhap, God will give me the grace to end my life in peace among these holy women."

"O, Patience!" cried little Hope, fretfully: "you'll not go away, and leave *me* behind? I'll be frightened to death without you," and she burst into tears.

"Helen might go with you," said Father Peter, calling Hope by her baptismal name. "Don't cry, child; the nuns, I am sure, will receive you into their school. It will be a good opportunity to secure your education. But, Agnes—" he added, looking kindly at Faith Leslie, who had grown into a neat, well-made girl of eighteen, with a quiet, modest face: "I think Agnes had better not go at present to Montreal."

Faith blushed, and lowered her pleasant eyes.

"I met Madame Belleperche, this morning, as we were coming here," she faltered. "She was very kind. She says she needs a maid. If you think I would suit her, Father——?" and again she hesitated.

The priest brought his long, slender hands together with a resounding clap.

"Very good!" he exclaimed with a funny emphasis: "very well! Just the thing! Madame, *votre marraine*, will make a kind, patient mistress, and Agnes, an excellent maid. Oh! we shall all take care of Agnes, you may be sure, all take the very best care of our little Agnes! As for the rest of you" (turning to the others): "Madame, the Superior has sent me a draft for

your journey. The Indian runner waits to guide you on your way."

The women and girls fell upon their knees, as he raised his hand in benediction, but he was fatherly and practical to the last.

"Off to the kitchen, now," he cried, as he finished the sign of the cross, and turned back with a sigh to his other weighty and unsolved difficulties.

"Get you all a good dinner from Brother Ignatius. Then, away with you, this very afternoon, to Montreal. I'll make you ready a letter for the Reverend Mother. Pray for me, and begin to be saints!"

Two or three months later, Lot Leslie was in the baker-shop of Jean Martin, waiting upon a customer, when a ragged boy brought him a three-cornered note.

It was a queer specimen of writing and spelling; but when Lot, after long and severe study, had made it out, it gave him a wonderful shock to read words that meant to say:

"There are four of us, here, at the convent in Notre Dame street, Mary and Catharine Tarbucket, your daughter Hope and myself. *'I am tossed up and down like the locust. My knees are weak through fasting, and my flesh faileth of fat-*

ness.' Come, see me, and you'll hear all the news from your old friend,

"PRUDENCE MARTHA SKILLET."

At his dinner-hour, Lot made haste to find the convent in Notre Dame street. It was a large, grey, prison-like building. He trembled considerably when he was shown by the portress into the little bare parlor with its whitewashed walls, its plaster Madonna, and great, solemn crucifix.

After a long wait—and the far-off ringing of a great bell that struck terror to his soul—the door opened, and Prudence Martha Skillet came in.

Lot scarcely knew her.

Always thin and raw-boned, her flesh had indeed, (as her note had said), failed of its fatness. But Leslie had never seen her look as nicely, or act as genteelly.

She had a good, wholesome face. Her plain, black dress was neat and close fitting, with its black cape and snowy collar. She wore a white linen apron that fairly shone from the iron; and her hair was done up smoothly under a very becoming cap of black net.

Her joy at meeting Lot was so extreme, so unaffected, that the poor fellow was quite overcome by it.

He began to regard her in a new light, as she

sat before him, looking quite the lady in the high-bred simplicity of her convent-clothes; and he listened eagerly to all the news of his dear ones that she poured forth, with a torrent of Scripture that seemed the sole remnant of her old personality.

Mary and Catharine, (she told him), were happy as the day was long in their new life, and would soon get the habit. Even Hope was very well content, and making good use of her time in the nuns' school.

As for herself—(here Prudence drew a wry face, and made a queer gesture of despair with her bony hands), she feared she was never cut out for a lay Sister, or any other sort of a Sister. She had become, according to her own account, "like a pelican of the wilderness," like "a night raven in the house," like "a solitary sparrow on the house-top."

"I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly," she went on to say, with king David: "I have turned in my anguish while the thorn is fastened —" and then to Lot's surprise and dismay, she burst into a mighty flood of tears.

He made some awkward efforts to console her; but his concern and embarrassment were still further increased, when she sprang to her feet, and extended her hands to him, sobbing wildly:

"Take me out of this, Lot Leslie, take me out

of this, I beg of you! I'm not fit for it, any more than I'm fit to be the queen of England herself!"

"There's only one way to take you out—that I can think of—" stammered Leslie, scratching his head, wherein had dawned a sudden inspiration: "Jean Martin (that's the baker), he's bin a-naggin' at me to marry agin. They want a woman to help in the kitchen, as my poor missus used to. A couple's better nor single help. They've a nice lot of rooms over the stable and—and—hang it all!"—he blurted, in conclusion, wiping the perspiration from his face with his coat sleeve: "I never was a man of many words. To make a short story of it—Prady, will you be my wife?"

Miss Skillet turned scarlet, clean up to the crimped border of her convent-cap. She glared about her with a startled look, as if the very walls must blush at the profanation of a marriage-proposal within their virgin-bounds.

Then, her eyes fell before Lot's, regarding her with open admiration, yet humble diffidence—a pleading glance, that made her feel very queer, and (strange to say), exceedingly happy.

"This is very sudden," she said at last, timidly, bashfully—in short, quite unlike her ordinary bustling, energetic fashion: "you do me a great honor; but, if you think I'll suit ——?"

"'Suit'?" echoed Lot in an ecstasy: "'suit'? Well, I swan! Talk about yer 'pelicans' and yer 'night-hawks' and yer 'solitary sparrers on the house-top'—I declare to gracious, I never know'd till this minnit what a mizzable, lonesome, forsaken creetur *I've* bin, ever sence my poor missus turn'd round and died! Come along, Prudy, my old gal! Now or never, we'll make a match of it, or my name ain't Lot Leslie!"

"Hold a little, master," said Prudence, still blushing, and twisting her apron-string around her finger, like bashful sixteen: "you see, I'm a Roman Cath'lic now. And you *ain't*. Might as well be said, first as last,—I can't marry you, at all, unless the priest ties the knot."

"Sure and sartin, the priest *shall* tie the knot," cried Leslie, cordially: "I don't mind tellin' you, I'm half a Papist myself, already. I give you leave to make a hull one outen me, sweet-heart, if you'll only marry me, this blessed day!"

Thereupon, Miss Skillet slipped away to hunt up Hope, her future stepdaughter, and to tell her surprising bit of news to the Reverend Mother Superior.

That wise nun smiled benignly on the bride-elect, (having been thoroughly convinced from the start of her unfitness for the cloister); but reminded her of the marriage bans that must be put up, and of other little preliminaries that

must be attended to, before she and Lot could be made one flesh.

The upshot of it all was, that a week later, with Jean Martin and his wife, in their best, for witnesses, and Hope as maid of honor, the happy couple went to the *rectorerie* of the Catholic church where little Love had been baptized. There, the same priest who had christened the child, and afterward, given the last Sacraments to Mistress Lot Leslie, (number one), administered the nuptial rite to Mistress Lot Leslie (number two) and her delighted spouse.

Then, Hope went back to her school, rejoicing in a pretty dress and a box of sweetmeats; while Lot, and his sturdy "missus," trudged off to begin a new life together in Jean Martin's comfortable annex, as happy as two sparrows nest-keeping in a summer grove.

One of Leslie's first acts, after that, was to write Timothy Grindstone a full account of the wedding, which he sent south by a trusty messenger.

The war was raging at the time, however, and Tim's answer was long in coming.

A wonderful letter it was, when it *did* come.

Timothy was a rich man.

Dorothy Pemberton had grown, day by day, more and more attached to her steward, treating him, at last, less like a servitor than a son. He

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had helped to nurse the old Quakeress, through a long and trying illness. No one, save Timothy, could support her up and down the broad old staircase of oak. No one, save Timothy, could carry her comfortably out into the wide, sunny garden,—where she lay for hours, daily, in her reclining chair among the flowers and bees, and where she died quietly, one day, leaving Timothy Grindstone (God bless her!) everything she possessed. He was now the owner of a splendid farm and homestead—of extensive stock and lands.

The house was a large, double mansion, simply but handsomely furnished, and with beautiful upper and lower balconies. He had room in it for all his old friends. "Come on, master, with your wife and little Hope," he wrote to Lot. "One wing of my double house is yours. It has been my dream for years. Life is too short, at best, for dear friends to be long parted. Let us spend the rest of our days together."

Having dispatched his letter to Montreal (thanks to Magnus Falconer, it was easier writing now, than in the days when he travelled with poor Alexander, the trader), Timothy dressed himself in his Sunday clothes, and started on a long-promised trip to the Assumption Mission. He had more to say to Father Peter, and to one of Father Peter's parishioners, than he could have written in a year.

He was not absent from Pennsylvania many days; but he attended to a great deal of business in a short space of time.

When he returned to his lovely homestead, he lifted out of his light vehicle, a young, blushing lady in white, whom he introduced to Pringle, his overseer, as *Mistress Timothy Grindstone!*

And Pringle thought it a very pretty sight to see his master escorting his bride, at once, over the farm, showing her not only the flower beds and the beehives in the garden, but taking her to see even the cows and horses, the pigs and the poultry, the stables, and the dairy.

And when, after a while, they strolled under the great walnut trees, into the fine old house, and roamed, hand in hand, through Dorothy Pemberton's many beautiful rooms, chatting, laughing, and planning, like a couple of spring birds, nest-building, Timothy was heard exclaiming in loud, cheery tones:

"God bless thee, Faith, my love! 'Twas a lucky day, after all—wasn't it?—when the savages drove us out from the old home on Swan Island!"

As the pleasant summer days drew on, they began to watch daily for the coming of the travellers from Montreal.

At last, one lovely June day when Faith sat knitting on the broad old balcony, looking al-

most pretty in her wedding-dress of white muslin and blue ribbons, (given her by her *Marraine Belleperche*),—while Timothy, in yellow nankeen and brass buttons, fussed about, close at hand, among the vines and flower beds, the Grindstone team turned a corner of the road, covered with foam, and Pringle, merrily cracking his whip, brought the family coach to the door, loaded with passengers.

First of all, tumbled out Master and Mistress Lot and, (wonderful to relate!) their baby, Timothy; next, Hope, looking quite the grown-up maiden in her first long gown; and then—and then—to the great surprise and delight of Tim and his wife, a dazzlingly beautiful girl and a tall, handsome boy, who were introduced by Lot, with a loud flourish of trumpets, as: "My daughter, Love Marianne, and my son, Wilson Joseph Lealie!"

There was so much noise and confusion at the outset,—so much to tell, and so much to hear, that it was a long while before Tim and Faith could make out the cause of the unexpected coming of Willy and Love.

Truth to say, the children looked out of place among their homely relatives, and amid such simple surroundings. And, while he was pondering this, Timothy learned, for the first time, of St. Ange's second will, and of the change it had

wrought in the lives of Madame and her adopted children.

The five closing years of his minority having elapsed, young Louis St. Ange had just arrived from France to claim the estate of his deceased uncle.

Whilst matters had remained in her own control, Madame had dealt nobly by Willy and Love. She had managed to deposit at her banker's, a substantial sum to their credit; and then, feeling a call to a higher life, and realizing that it was a cruel thing to keep the children longer from their own, (with whom there was now no risk of perversion, or damage to the little ones' souls)—she had retired to the convent where Mary and Catharine Tarbuki had just made their solemn vows of profession: and proposed to spend there the residue of her days.

Love had been very averse to this arrangement. Being a spoiled and worldly-minded little damsel, she had been very unwilling to return to her father, and renounce the elegant life of the St. Ange mansion.

This fact convinced Eileen that the little girl singularly needed the discipline before her. At parting, Madame spoke to her so wisely and tenderly, and showed her so clearly, that the highest aristocracy is that of the faithful children of God—that the best riches are those of a meek,

humble, unselfish heart; and that no beauty of face or form is as lovely or as lasting as that which springs from a pure and pious soul—that Love promised her, with tears, to accept, as patiently as she could, her new life in a lowlier sphere, and to strive with all her powers to please God, and do His holy Will, among her commonplace relations.

Faithfully, did she keep her childish promise.

Though many a time, she failed through weakness; though, again and again, her spirit grew sore and chafed under her tedious task, and amid uncongenial surroundings—with the help of God and our Lady, and the blessing of St. Anthony (to whom she had been consecrated in the Mission-scales at Lorette), she struggled bravely on—ripening, at last, into one of those rare creatures who quite forget themselves for others—into a noble, useful woman, whose soul was as beautiful as her face.

When she had become the joy of her household, and the support and comfort of all within the circle of her influence, young Louis St. Ange came to her from Montreal with a message from his aunt.

Madame had corresponded with her favorite through her years of trial, and helped her in her struggle against self.

She had shown Louis, (in his visits to the con-

vent), all those beautiful, humble letters from Love, which reflected, like clear mirrors, the pure, generous soul of the girl. And now, when that excellent young man had grown to appreciate and love her adopted daughter, Eileen sent him to her to ask her to be his bride.

His wooing, under such happy auspices, was a short and successful one. All agreed that so handsome and amiable a pair of Christian lovers seemed made for one another; and soon, there was a charming wedding in the old double house in Philadelphia.

The marriage of Louis St. Ange and Marianne Love Leslie took place at a nuptial Mass in the new St. Mary's church, on Fourth street above Spruce, then recently builded by the Rev. Robert Harding.

The French ambassador and his *suite* were present at the ceremony; but none of those courtly grandees were prouder or happier, on the occasion, than the bride's own dear honest relatives, all in their best, in the front pews.

There were Lot and Prudence with their two young children: Timothy and Faith, with their three little Grindstones.

Hope, in white muslin and wild roses, was the slender, modest bridesmaid, and Willy, with his white satin favor in his buttonhole, the gentlemanly groomsman.

Tall, dark, and distinguished was the young Frenchman, Louis St. Ange, and beside him, the bride looked fair and lovely as an angel in her rich dress of ivory-tinted satin and her trailing veil of rare old lace—Madame's own wedding-dress and veil;—and when Love and Louis journeyed home to Montreal, after the merry marriage-breakfast at the farm—Willy, their brother, went with them. Not to abide with them, however, in the stately St. Ange mansion, where Love was to rule, thenceforth, as the second Madame St. Ange—reigning as a mistress where she had begged shelter as a child—but to enter the college directed by Father Eugene O'Connell, and there, at Timothy's expense, to begin his studies for the priesthood.

All the golden threads of our story being thus gathered up—all the tangled ends smoothed out, and the holy dead sleeping in their consecrated graves—we seem to see the Angel of God's Will, in the simple farmhouse at Philadelphia, as in the rich mansion, and hallowed Seminary in Montreal, waving his shining wings over our dear Swan Islanders, and shedding his priceless benedictions upon the lives and destinies of those friends, high or lowly, old or young, whom we have known in this eventful narrative, as

"LOT LESLIE'S FOLLS."

An Afterword with the Reader.

If the woof of this little tale be partly of fiction—its warp is mainly of fact.

Improbable as may seem its plot—unreal or exaggerated its personnel, the story of *LOT LESLIE'S FOLKS* is based upon records of undeniable authenticity.

It is certain, that a white family, closely resembling the Leslies in all material points, was captured by the Indians on an island, off the coast of Maine, in the summer of 1755.

The father and mother were sold to Canadians—the first, to a baker; whilst the youngest girl, a baby, was purchased from the Indians, and adopted by a Madame St. Auge, wife of a rich merchant of Montreal, whose only daughter had then recently died.

Little Love Leslie (or Eleanor St. Auge, as she was christened in the Catholic church in Montreal), is really a creature of flesh and blood. Her brother Joseph, a captive in the St. François tribe, was also adopted, later on, by the St. Auges.

Love was stolen from her adopted parents (as we have narrated) by an agent from New England—was recaptured by the Indians, and taken by them to the St. François Mission. Eventually, she was returned, for a ransom, to Madame St.

Augé, who had her carefully educated in the convents of the Ursulines, both in Montreal and Quebec. While we admit that some small liberties have been taken in our story with the unities of time, place, and person, we respectfully challenge the critic to prove that certain curious and thrilling experiences of the Leslies and their servants, therein set forth, have not their parallels in genuine colonial narratives of CAPTIVITIES among the savages in the eighteenth century—which, by the way, in vivid coloring and dramatic incident, usually read more like romance, than sober reality.

The names of *Lot Leslie's Folks* may not be actually recorded in the Diary (or *Livre de Comptes*) of Père Pierre Potier S. J.—still extant, as Mr. Richard Elliott tells us,¹ in the archives of St. Mary's College, Montreal.

Nevertheless, in their simple faith and purity of life, they are worthy to live, with others of their kind, in the fairest pages of our Church-history in pre-Revolutionary days—in the annals of those early religious Missions, of whose blessed precincts, it may be truly said:

"You never tread upon them, but you set
Your feet upon some ancient history."

—THE AUTHOR.

¹ *Last of the Huron Mission*. In AMER. CATH. QUARTERLY REVIEW, to which the writer is much indebted.

